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GRADUATE SCHOOL

Dissertation

THE ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT OF OLD TESTAMENT AND INTER-TESTAMENTAL
BELIEF REGARDING LIFE AFTER DEATH

by

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. The Problem of This Dissertation

The problem which this dissertation presents and attempts to solve is two-fold: to discover the origin of the belief in life after death; and to follow its development as far as the stage reached in the Old Testament and in the writings of the Inter-Testamental period. This involves also a study of man's early awakening in religious consciousness and his conception of God, for "both in form and content eschatology will be modified by the nature of the God believed in."¹ Man's early ideas of God and of his relationship with God on earth must have an influence upon his conception of the life after death, and so have a place in this study. The problem thus includes an investigation of man's awakening consciousness of spiritual things and his awareness of God, as well as his belief in life continuing after earthly existence is past and various types of life so pictured.

The origin of none of man's basic beliefs can be found with certainty, for they are buried in the distant past; but there are signs along the way which indicate the path of progress and give a basis for analysis. Graves of ancient men yield artifacts which tell of their life and culture, and also bear witness to their belief that life goes on and that such things are needed in another world than this. There are also men living today in some remote sections of the world who have not advanced beyond the culture of the Stone Age. A study of these people throws some light on the far distant past. The passing of the ages marked a development along all lines of culture, and specifically along the line being studied here. This development was by no means uniform, and attention must be paid to the degrading elements as well as to the uplifting ones.

1. T. W. Manson, The Teaching of Jesus (Cambridge, England: At the University Press, 1955), p. 246.

While the main emphasis of this study will be placed upon Old Testament and Inter-Testamental literature, the investigation will range far afield, since many of these ideas were not limited to Israel, but were shared by all mankind. Also the culture of the surrounding nations made some impact on Israel's thought and life, and upon the growth of Biblical literature, so must have consideration here.

B. The Limitations of This Study

There has been no attempt in this study to deal at length with the many problems of Biblical literature from the standpoints of the various documents and their redactions, other than in necessary for a chronology for the understanding of the development of ideas. That this development was not uniform is often evident. Recognition must be taken of the fact that the later writings frequently report earlier traditions, and also that old folkways and the awakening consciousness of higher ideals existed side by side. Thus while the great prophets were proclaiming the religion of the One God, many of the people were worshipping idols on the high places.

This study, while taking note of the influence of the idea of God, is specifically concerned with the growing picture of life after death, from the early vague belief to the vivid details found in the pseudepigraphical writings. Biblical passages studied have been chosen with that thought in view, and the discussion of them is generally limited to that theme.

C. Previous Research in the Field

While the early stages of man's life are veiled in mystery, since man had no way of communicating his thoughts to succeeding generations, the archaeologists are finding among the ruins of past civilizations many things that make it possible to understand the lives of the people of prehistoric ages, and to know something of their ideas and beliefs. One of the beliefs, the one that stands out most clearly, is that regarding a future existence after life on earth has ended, for burial deposits of ancient man have been preserved when all else has been destroyed.

After the discovery of methods of writing and its development into use both for inscriptions and in literature, archaeological discoveries give a firmer basis for understanding and interpreting the past. A great deal of literature from the ancient world has been discovered among the ruins of lost civilizations, and its translation has been the result of painstaking study. Much of this has to do with the belief in life after death and methods by which the best possible existence can be assured.

Archaeology has developed into a technical science in recent years, and the work is still going on, with new things being discovered continually. Many books reporting the results of archaeological research have contributed to the understanding of ancient history and culture. Even those of a general nature, and those pursuing a specific line of research in a different field, have contributed to this particular investigation, since burial deposits form an important part of every excavation area.

The problem of life after death has been the subject of many sermons and writings in both poetry and prose, since sorrow for the passing of loved ones has called forth messages of consolation through the ages. These have made very little if any contribution to this study, however, since they are usually based on New Testament evidence, and this investigation is limited to the earlier writings and to scientific analysis.

D. Preparation for This Study

This dissertation is the result of many years of interest and study. The main problem has been a question in mind since childhood, and studies in Latin and Greek literature at Stetson University awakened further interest. Plans were made for studies for a Master's degree in this field under the direction of Dr. Charles H. Farriss, Vice President of Stetson University and Professor of Greek. Some of the work was done, but circumstances made the completion impossible. The degree was earned several years later in the field of Religious Education, but the interest remained.

The author was introduced to the specific field of Archaeology by the President Emeritus of Boston University, Dr. William Fairfield Warren, who

spent several winters in St. Augustine, Florida, during the last years of his life. He was particularly interested in Babylonian Cosmology at the time, and the periods of stenographic dictation usually ended in discussions of the work being done in Babylonia.

Nine summers in Winona Lake, Indiana, included archaeological studies at the Winona School of Theology, conducted by the following professors: Dr. Camden M. Cobern, Dr. Robert Dick Wilson, Dr. Melvin Grove Kyle, and Dr. George L. Robinson. Later, in Boston University School of Theology, studies in Archaeology were continued under Dr. Robert H. Pfeiffer and Dr. Elmer A. Leslie, who is the Major Professor under whom this present project is being investigated. Through all these studies there was special interest in the field of this particular research.

Special preparation for this work was a year of study at the American School of Oriental Research in Jerusalem, where the instructors were: Dr. William H. Morton of the Southern Baptist Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky; Father Patrick W. Skehan of the Catholic University of America in Washington; and Dr. John W. Wevers of the University of Toronto. School work included field trips to visit archaeological sites in Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, Turkey, Moab, Edom, and Egypt. Excavation was in progress in some of these places, making it possible to study at first hand the work of Dr. André Parrot at Mari; Dr. Claude Schaeffer at Ras Shamra; Père de Vaux at Qumran, Tirezah, and at the École Biblique; a group from Switzerland at Palmyra, and one from Ankara at Resafa; and Mr. G. Lankester Harding, Director of Antiquities for Jordan. Opportunity was given for a study of some of the Dead Sea Scrolls, and for a visit to the basement of the Palestine Museum where the many small fragments found in the caves are being painstakingly assembled. There was also some actual excavation: twelve weeks at Jericho in cooperation with the British School, and seven weeks at Dhiban in Moab. Work at Jericho was under the direction of Dr. Kathleen M. Kenyon of the University of London, assisted by Miss Dorothy Marshall, F.S.A. Helping to assemble the catalog for the Jordan Museum gave further insight; and a study of the Jericho Tomb Catalog prepared by Miss Diana Kirkbride gave vital statistics.

D. The Methodology of This Dissertation

A great deal of note-taking preceded the writing of this dissertation. Research connected with this study can be divided into two parts: that done in the libraries from books; and that done on the archaeological field. A third method, which was part of the first, was special Directed Study and Research Courses at Boston University School of Theology. From the first the plan of this dissertation was in mind, and the notes were taken and filed in sections similar to the alignment of the chapters.

Beginning with the earliest archaeological finds, there has been an attempt to trace the growing awareness of God on the part of man, and his feeling that life goes on after death. Prehistoric sources have been studied all over the world with the realization that everywhere men have been reaching out after the Infinite, trying to find God, and seeking the answer to the mystery of life. In the later years, the study has been narrowed to Israel and the surrounding nations, with the particular emphasis on the teaching of the Old Testament, and the writings of the Inter-Testamental Period, where the clearest pictures of life after death are drawn.

It has been an enlightening experience to discover that men, far back in the dim reaches of prehistoric time, have believed firmly in life continuing beyond the grave, for which their burial deposits give clear evidence. The conception of God, and of eternal life after death, has been a slow development as men have grown in spiritual understanding.

CHAPTER II

THE SUB-HUMAN PERIOD

A. The Emergence of Man

Man's beginning is far back in the clouds of pre-history, so far back that it is impossible to give any accurate dating for the event, probably in the early part of the last Ice-Age known as Pleistocene, or the first half of the Quarternary Period. In discussing the lengths of the Ice-Age periods, Dr. Flint states that any dating has a margin of at least plus or minus ten thousand years.¹

In the creation of the earth from the primeval waters, there emerged land areas with granite, gneiss, and other crystalline rocks. At one time there was probably a huge continent stretching from Asia to South America; Europe, Africa, and the Americas may have been a single continent, or there may have been a land mass between. Whether such conditions existed during the life of the human race is questionable, although there are folk-tales regarding sunken lands which might indicate racial memories.² An almost continuous submarine ridge has been charted under the Atlantic Ocean from Iceland to Antarctica, averaging about a mile under the surface of the sea. In the Pacific Ocean such a ridge runs from central Asia to Antarctica, and there is a series of ridges from Japan south. Beach sand has been brought up from submerged depths of ocean, and salt-water fossils have been found high up in the mountains of all continents. Land contours have changed with the change of climate.³ Long ages of cold known as glacial periods were followed by inter-glacial periods, only to give way to the cold again.

1. Richard Foster Flint, "Glacial Epoch," Ency. Brit. (1946), X, 379.

2. Hutton Webster, History of Civilization (Boston: D. C. Heath and Company, 1940), p. 587.

3. F. Barrows Colton, "Our Global Ocean, Last and Vast Frontier," Nat. Geog. Mag., 87(1945), 121,122.

In these remote days man first appeared on the earth. Geology and anthropology give some answers to the question regarding the time. The geologists date the rocks in which the fossil remains of the earliest men are found and give approximate dates:

Years B.C.

- 1,000,000: uncertain traces of human life.
- 500,000: a few parts of skulls; "thunderstones" and roughly-shaped flints.
- 50,000: Paleolithic remains, still sub-human, but with worked flints and fire.
- 20,000: homo sapiens, true man.¹

That word "thunderstones" is interesting. For years men found strangely-shaped stones, usually somewhat pear-shaped, and with one sharp edge, which seemed to have been venerated in prehistoric times in Babylonia, Palestine, Egypt, and throughout Europe. It was never considered that they had ever been in use. They were called "thunderstones" because it was thought that they fell from the sky during thunder storms; or "eoliths" meaning "dawn-stones" as though they were a part of earth's creation. In later years it was thought that in some volcanic movement, or by glacial action, or by some other such method of the creative process, these stones were shaped. They were not all alike, but were found in flint, obsidian, jade, quartz, or basalt. In the last half-century tests in the laboratories have revealed that any such formation is highly improbable if not impossible, and that these stones are artificial. This pushes back the age of man aeons of years.²

In the story of human advance . . . we picked up the threads of developing human life at the point where man became the first known implement-making creature, at least several hundred thousand, perhaps a million years ago. At that stage he is regarded today as the common property of the paleontologists and geologists on the one hand, and the archaeologists on the other. We . . . thus jostle elbows with the natural scientists, an experience helpful to both.³

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1. Chicago Museum of Natural History, Bulletin, No. 15 (1944), p. 25.
 2. Samuel Christian Schmucker, Man's Life on Earth (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1925), pp. 59-66.
 3. J. H. Breasted, The Dawn of Conscience (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1933), p. 391.

B. Scientific Discoveries

It has been only in recent years that geologists have found a calendar in the rocks: stratified rocks to which they are able to give dates have imbedded in them fossils of many creatures including man, which must belong to the same period of time. Anaximander of Miletus, in the Sixth Century B.C., perceived something of the nature of fossils, but made no impression on his contemporaries. Pliny, a Roman naturalist, called a fossil shark's tooth a "tongue-stone" which "groweth not upon the ground but in the eclipse of the moon falleth from heaven." Now, however, men have learned to read messages in the rocks and find an amazing story of the evolutionary processes.¹

Both anthropologists and anthropometrists have been interested in the investigation of the remains of the sub-human creatures who have left their marks on the earth in so many places. Wherever skeletons or parts of these skeletons have been found, they have been carefully measured and labeled. For example, there were four skeletons found at Les Eyzies in southern France and named Cromagnon from the cave in which they were found; these had skulls much larger and heavier than those of modern men. Later other skeletons of the same type, or parts of skeletons mostly skulls, have been found in several places throughout Europe. Another earlier type was found in Java by Eugene Dubois in 1891 and named pithecanthropus erectus, meaning an ape-man who stands erect. From a thigh bone, two teeth, and the upper part of the skull, scientists were able to judge the size of the man and his mentality. In 1936 three more skulls of the same type were found, also in Java. Skulls and parts of skeletons of man-like creatures, or sub-human men, have been found in China, in Palestine, and in Africa also.²

Craniometry, part of the larger field of anthropometry, is particularly interested in the measurement of skulls, both ancient and modern. By their

1. Harry S. Ladd and Roland W. Brown, "Fossils Lift the Veil of Time," Nat. Geog. Mag., 109(1956), 365.

John Stuart Allen and Others, Atoms, Rocks, and Galaxies (New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1942), p. 171.

2. Unsigned Articles, "Cromagnon" and "Pithecanthropus," Ency. Brit. (1946) XVII, 972 and VI, 736.

measurements, the shape of the brain can be determined. Scientists can tell by this shape how well-developed the creature was, whether he could see well, how he walked, how clearly he could reason. These early skulls are very definitely sub-human, yet show signs of emerging human qualities. When the craniological data are arranged chronologically, a definite development is recognizable.¹

Man became the first implement-making creature not later than the beginning of the Ice Age, probably a million years ago, and possibly earlier. At the same time he became the first weapon-making creature. . . . The age of weapons is thus doubtless a million years old.²

It is customary to think of the first men as violent and aggressive, and the artists have often depicted them in that way. But there are others who think that the first men were quiet, perhaps even timid.

Man is a social animal, and the social animals are not held together by violence, nor--save in a few morbid cases--do they attack members of their own species. The more natural, the more primitive, the more "wild" man is, the less does he depend on violence to keep his societies together. . . . Not only are we social animals, but we are derived from a stock far more receptive than aggressive, far more sensitive than imposing.³

How man advanced is a matter of speculation. His development was probably almost imperceptibly slow, but along all lines together, both physically and culturally. His hands developed technical skill at the same time that his mind recognized the need for the new technique. As religion is counted one of the arts, his religious development will be found in that field.

The arts can be divided broadly into two main classes: those that help man to live, and those that help him to live well. . . . Thus in the former class would be reckoned such arts as relate to food, clothing, shelter, fighting,

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1. Thomas Dale Stewart, "Cranometry," Ency. Brit. (1946), VI, 640.
 2. Breasted, op. cit., Introduction, pp. xxv, xxvi.
 3. Gerald Heard, The Source of Civilization (New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1937), p.1.

trading and transport; in the second, those concerned with fine arts, science, and religion, together with various lighter interests that may be summed up under the head of amusements.¹

C. God's Progressive Revelation to Man

While much of man's development may have come about by a trial and error method, his religious awakening and growth may have come in part at least from a source outside himself and apart from his immediate surroundings.

"Geniuses who have given testimony of their most creative moments often refer to something beyond their own power."²

A transcendent immanent God actually reveals himself to men, imparting to them with his own life both light to see and power to live by. Revelation means that human finiteness experiences a "divine invasion" by which something from beyond breaks through to be appropriated by the receptive human spirit. . . . Revelation is always mediated in part through physical nature, but primarily through human beings in the stream of history.³

For anything regarding the things of God, the Bible is a source book. In its pages can be found the records of God's revelation to man. One definite instance is found at Caesarea Philippi where Jesus was questioning his disciples:

He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?"
Simon Peter replied, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." And Jesus answered him, "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jona! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven."
(Matt.16:15-17)

That was revelation, on the authority of Jesus. But that was a long way down the road of culture, and a specific case. There is another suggestion regarding revelation, also in the words of Jesus:

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1. Robert Ranulph Marett, "Anthropology," Ency. Brit. (1946), II, 42.
 2. Robert Ulich, The Human Career, A Philosophy of Self-Transcendence (New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1955), p. 46.
 3. Georgia Harkness, The Resources of Religion (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1936), p. 142.

"I have yet many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all truth." (John 16:12)

This suggests progressive revelation. There were certain things that the disciples were not ready to understand, so they were not told. Thus it must have been with prehistoric man. There were many things that he could not understand; but some things he could grasp, and those were revealed to him in a way suited to his needs, for God "knows our frame; he remembers that we are dust." (Psa.104:14)

According to Lessing, revelation is a part of education, and merely speeds up the educational process. "Revelation gives nothing to the human species which the human reason left to itself might not attain; only it has given, and still gives to it, the most important of these things earlier."¹ Whether man could ever have advanced along cultural lines without help from beyond himself is a question.

The opening chapter of Genesis was written long after man appeared upon earth and had developed God-consciousness, by a poet-prophet who spoke under the inspiration of God with insight into the onward-going process of creation. His "In the beginning God" is followed by the record of God's guidance all through the long evolutionary process, as the universe came into being. The earth brought forth, and the sea brought forth; there were great whales, and living creatures that swam in the sea and that flew in the air and that walked upon the earth. And then came man. (Genesis 1) How much that means, scientists are only beginning to realize.

This mutation of sub-man into man, which was accomplished in circumstances of which we have no record, under the aegis of primitive societies, was a more profound change, a greater step in growth, than any progress which man has yet achieved under the aegis of civilization.²

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1. Gotthold Ephraim Lessing, The Education of the Human Race, trans., F. W. Robinson, Harvard Classics, XXXII, 195.
 2. Arnold Toynbee, A Study of History, Abridgement of Vols. I-VI by D. C. Somervill (London: Oxford University Press, 1947), p. 49.

Finally, after all the long ages, there appeared upon the scene one who has been labeled homo sapiens, the thinking man, the man who could reason, the first true man. Others before him had prepared the way, others before him had developed the use of tools, but this was the first one whose brain showed any signs of a reasoning process, any real intelligence, which is the mark of true man. From this time on he can be observed as he goes onward and upward culturally, and specifically for this investigation as he awakens to spiritual things.

CHAPTER III

THE PALEOLITHIC PERIOD 230,000--12,000 B.C.

A. Dating

The Paleolithic Period covers many thousand years, from the first recognition of a sub-human species of man on earth until true man, known as homo sapiens was well established. Dates are only approximate in these early ages. The period is usually divided according to the findings of skeletal remains in the various stages of development in southern France.

Dates, B.C.		
	Upper:	Magdalenian, from LaMagdala, rock shelter near Dordogne.
	100,000--	Solutrian, rock shelter at Solutre, Dordogne.
	12,000	
		Aurignacian, cave at Aurignac in the Pyrenees, now quarried away.
Paleolithic	Middle:	
	180,000--	Mousterian, rock shelter at LeMoustier, Dordogne.
	100,000	
		Miquoquian, rock shelter at LaMiquoque, Dordogne.
	Lower:	
	230,000--	Acheulian, gravel pit at St.Acheul, Amiens.
	180,000	
		Chellean, gravel pit at Chelles-sur-Marne.

These names are in general use, although frequently other names are used, referring to artifacts found in some particular locality. While occasional references will be made to earlier ages, interest for this investigation centers in the Upper Paleolithic Period with the arrival of true man, and his first halting steps in civilization and culture.

1. G. C. McCurdy, Human Origins, A Manual of Pre-History (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 2 Vols., 1926), I, 86.

Dates from Albright, op. cit., Chap. III, except for the Upper Paleolithic, extended from 20,000 to 12,000 B.C. in accordance with the dating given in the Palestine Museum, Jerusalem, Jordan.

B. Theories Regarding the First True Men

There are a number of different theories regarding the first true men, the main question being whether mankind started from a single person, or from an unknown number of men and women, as when "the earth brought forth." Adam, who figures in the Biblical account of creation (Genesis 2) may be a single person or a generic name for mankind. There is no way to answer the question definitely, but as skeletons of the sub-human species have been found in many parts of the world, it would seem logical that true men appeared in several places. Another speculation is concerning the way it happened: slowly, quietly perhaps, like the first leaves of spring that show their living green almost before winter has gone, or like the dawning light of early morning. But some flowers burst into bloom, and occasionally the morning sky is a riot of color; so perhaps things did not happen exactly in the same way all the time. There is one historic evidence given for the way a great change came to humanity:

When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly a sound came from heaven like the rush of a mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared to them tongues as of fire, distributed, and resting on each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit.

(Acts 2:2-4a)

Thus man became a quickening spirit. There was nobody to report the event when man became a living soul, but it was revealed to some unknown, inspired prophet of old that it was the very breath of God which gave him life:

The Lord formed man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being.

(Genesis 2:7)

A poet was similarly inspired to explain it:

And God said, "Let us make man in our image,
after our likeness." . . .
So God created man in his own image,
in the image of God he created him;
male and female he created them.

(Genesis 1:26a,27)

Poetry and symbols do no more than make suggestions, with no definite basis for a decisive answer. Archaeologists and others in similar branches of the scientific field have posited various theories, each of which may have some measure of truth, but all of which are at best speculation.

Some think that the best way to arrive at any understanding of these first human beings is to study the primitive people of the world. There are a few places where people are living in exceedingly primitive fashion, as their ancestors must have lived for millennia: some of the islands of the sea, the interior of Australia, parts of Africa. However, even here the advance is much farther than anything in these long-past ages.

Another theory has to do with studying infants, since this period has been called the infancy of the human race. The very first glimmer of a baby's awakening may give some symbolic suggestions: the time when his eyes begin to focus, the first recognition of hands and feet, the first notice of bright objects. But beyond that state the infant has nothing to contribute, for the culture environment into which he is born is such that the child is taught, rather than having to learn for himself. As the child develops there are older people to answer his questions, and give guidance. Nothing of this kind was available for the first human beings. They had to learn everything for themselves, usually by the trial and error method, their mistakes no doubt often getting them out on the wrong track, though they inevitably found the road upward, as present culture gives evidence.

C. Theories of Man's Religious Development

Before a study of the main theme of life after death and the conception of the world beyond this one, it is necessary to know something about man's finding God, since only through God can there be such life. If man was made in the image of God, there must have been some way even in those early years for him to find some sort of communion with God, even though it was probably little more than a feeling of something he could not understand. The first men did not know to seek for God; God must therefore have been calling to them, even in that early stage, through nature, through events of their everyday life, simply, in ways that they could understand.

I do think that many mysteries ascribed to our own inventions have been the courteous revelation of Spirits (for those noble essences in Heaven bear a friendly regard unto their fellow Natures on Earth.)¹

Intuitive insight is not the result of pedestrian logic; it does not follow naturally from an already given fact; it is not a progress along an inevitable sequence of cause and effect. It is, as are all higher mental activities, closely related to the gift of fantasy that allows man to conjure up, and project himself into situations which do not exist in actuality. . . . There is something that is not merely rational, yet not irrational. Between the conscious and the unconscious there seems to be an area of twilight like dawn between the night and day. Something "dawns on us" the genius of language expresses it. In this preconceptual dawn lies the deepest source of productivity. Without it there would not be the great religious prophecies, the great works of art, nor even the great scholarly discoveries.²

1. The Polytheistic View

The theories of man's growing awareness of God, while there are many in number, fall under two heads: polytheistic and monotheistic. From the polytheistic standpoint, man is thought of as first endowing everything with life. He was just beginning to be aware of himself, and of the world around him, and he thought of all other people, animals, and inanimate objects as being like himself.³ When they were well known, they were his friends; when unknown, possible enemies. He trembled before a thunderstorm and thought it an evil spirit. The stone he rolled before his cave was a friendly guardian. The tree by which he recognized his path was a guide. Some days the sun was warm and a friend; at other times it hid its face; and occasionally it burned him, and then was an enemy indeed. Everything came to mean something good or evil for him; everything had a personal significance. Gradually he learned that there were some things far beyond him, while he could control others. The sun that gave him light and heat

1. Sir Thomas Browne, Religio Medici, Harvard Classics, III, 296.

2. Ulich, op. cit., p. 46.

3. George Foote Moore, The Birth and Growth of Religion (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1926), p. 3.

by day, the moon and stars that made the night beautiful, were high up and far beyond his reach. They became high gods with lesser ones in their train. Some of the lesser ones seemed to respond to his tentative efforts to gain favor or avert disaster, and these became his special divinities. A strange smooth pebble that rolled in his path one day became a talisman. Thus the millennia passed and there gradually developed order in the spirit world, and an elaborate system of ritual practices, some of which might be called true worship, and others magic. Later he came to realize that the inanimate things have no life, and one after another of these spirits were left behind. At last he climbed to the very mountain-top of spiritual experience: the recognition of one God! But that was after the ages had entered into history, and some never reached that plane of understanding.

2. The Monotheistic View.

On the other hand, the monotheistic approach gives an entirely different picture. The first men were quiet, simple creatures who did not understand very much and dimly accepted life as they found it. They did not think about things very much—perhaps they did not think!¹ They were not very sensitive to anything; their ears did not catch many sounds, perhaps only those in certain pitches; their eyes did not focus on all distances, and perhaps they did not see many of the details, nor catch a great variety of colors. They were probably aware only of the things immediately around them. But one day there came a change, one of the final steps in the evolution of true man. Waking to a bird song more beautiful than any they had heard before, they arose to greet the dawn. Colors glowed in the eastern sky and painted the mountain tops with gold; the sea rolled in shimmering froth at their feet; there came the rustling of the morning wind through the trees. Something lifted their hearts and they gave a shout of joy. Somehow their souls were born, and they knew that they were in the presence of something great and glorious—they did not yet know God. Perhaps there is something of that

1. Hans Conrad Zacharias, Proto-History (St. Louis, Missouri: B. Herder Book Company, 1947), p. 25.

soul awakening moment reflected in:

When the morning stars sang together,
and all the sons of God shouted for joy.
(Job 38:7)

Life went on and the high moment passed, but things were never quite the same again. They continued to feel the awareness of Something beyond themselves in many things, and gradually localized this into separate spirits, but the glory of the golden moment never entirely departed from them.

Thus the great round sun came up, flaming splendidly, and instantly the whole world sang and hummed. The birds in the trees and the insects on the ground sang a great Te Deum. Nature herself taught primal man to be a sun worshiper, and man in his heart still follows the ancient teaching.¹

Dr. Marett is one of those who think that the awareness of a great and universal Spirit came before any personification of local deities:

At least as early as he had learned to fashion a flint, man had likewise hammered out some notion, symbolized we know not how, but at a guess by many symbols rather than one, of a Transcendent Power working in him and through his environment for his good.²

However, this high god was hard to live up to: "the nearer the ground, the more comfortable for the groundlings."³ So men began to find lesser spirits: some to help, which were worshiped; others to hinder, which were appeased in various ways. Whichever the start, the end seems to have been the same. Perhaps there were some few who never bowed the head to stick or stone, but if so they must have made little impression on their fellows. It is certain, however, that some kept their worship more pure than others, for some had a great many more fetishes than others.

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1. C. W. Ceram, Gods, Graves, and Scholars, The Story of Archaeology, trans., E. B. Garside (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1954), p. 76, quoting E. H. Thompson.
 2. Robert Ranulph Marett, The Raw Material of Religion (London: Oxford University Press, 1929), p. 5.
 3. Marett, ibid., p. 21.

Even if the first man were furnished at once with a conception of One God, yet it was not possible that this conception should subsist long in its clearness. As soon as the Human Reason, left to itself, began to elaborate it, it broke up the one Immeasurable into many Measurables and gave a note or sign to every one of those parts. Hence naturally rose polytheism and idolatry.¹

But this is all speculation, and it is necessary to find solid facts. Archaeologists suggest that there is just one clue pointing to understanding of the earliest human thought in this regard: a few graves have been found. Judging from the type of burial, deductions can be made regarding their ideas about life beyond this earth. Graves are the only traces left of the earliest men. Nothing else has survived. If they took shelter in caves when the weather was cold or wet, others have lived in the same caves after them and obliterated their traces. But the dead were buried with some sort of care from the earliest times, and it is the dead who speak in answer to the great questions of life and death, and the contact with God.

D. Death Regarded as the Turning-Point in Religious Awakening

The earliest sub-human species probably paid no more attention to the dead than the animals do. Death meant nothing to them. There is an almost universal story among primitive people, handed down through mythology, of a time when men did not die. Some of these legends refer to snakes and crabs, which change their skins or shells, and thus renew their youth. This was once men's method, but the snake stole it from him, and from that time on man died.² Perhaps this is a reflection, not of a time when men did not die, but of a time when death meant nothing to them. Many feel that the shock of death was the turning-point in religious consciousness, and the first realization of the spirit world. Death has always marked the culmination of life. There must have come a time, however, when death came to have real significance.

1. Lessing, *op. cit.*, p. 196.

2. Effie Bendann, Death Customs, An Analytical Study of Burial Rites (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1930), p. 26.

It was an important moment in evolution when men realized that death is different from life and that there are two planes of existence, one terrestrial and one supra- or infra-terrestrial. Then the character of the dead becomes august with dignity and honor, and the cult of ancestor-worship follows; or it becomes terrifying, leading to fear and propitiation of spirits.¹

1. Dreams

Perhaps the dream was the simplest way for the realization to come to men that the dead still live. A man lay sleeping by the campfire, but a strange part of him went to distant fields and had various experiences, very similar to those in life, which he shared with his friends--sometimes with friends who were also sleeping by the campfire; sometimes with friends who had died, but who met him in the strange dream world, strong and brave as when they lived on earth. So he was convinced that the dead were still alive and well, and that their life was similar to his own. Then again, perhaps after eating too heartily of the kill, he had wild nightmares which showed him a different world, peopled with malicious, evil spirits which terrified him. Was this a figment of the imagination? Or did God speak to men through dreams when there was no better way?

And he said, "Hear my words: If there is a prophet among you, I the Lord make myself known to him in a vision, I speak with him in a dream." (Num. 12: 6)

If man's acceptance of the spirit world is valid, God must have been speaking to him in the only way he could understand.

"Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." In words so translated the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews touches upon one of the achievements of the human spirit that deeply underlies the technological progress by which man's march through the centuries has been accompanied.²

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1. M. Leonhardt, "Quelques Elements Communs aux Formes Inferieures de la Religion," Histoire des Religions, ed. Maurice Brillant et René Aigrain (Paris: Blond et Gay, 3 Vols., 1953), I, 96.
 2. W. C. Graham and H. C. May, Culture and Conscience, An Archaeological Study of the New Religious Past in Palestine (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1936), Introduction.

2. Memories

Closely associated with dreams are memories. A man could sit quietly by the fire in the evening and recall all the events of the day. He could recount the tale to his friends, and feel that he was living it all over again. Further, his mind could go back to things that happened in the past, even to people who had long been dead, and there was such vividness in his memory that he could think it was but yesterday. Such things were beyond his comprehension, but reaching out to some sort of understanding, he could very simply posit a spirit world, where not only the dead lived, but where past experiences were stored up. Sharing these experiences with his fellows would crystallize their meaning. The experimental ideas of one generation become the firm convictions of the next. But they must be acted upon and proved first. That proof could be found in the satisfaction that came as a result of their action.

Historically religion did not begin as an idea or faith, but as an idea acted upon. A dream, a death, a surprising event or other overwhelming circumstance gave to some early man a dimly conceived idea about an object or about all the objects of his world. This event became a sign to guide his course, or a spirit to be mollified, or a force to be controlled. There followed actions of divination or magic or sacrifice or other response. Something like this must have occurred many thousands of times in the life of primitive man. The idea, to be sure, was precedent to the action, but the idea alone was not religion. It became religion only when acted upon.¹

How they acted upon any idea is unknown except in the one line regarding burial. Here, even in the very early pre-human stage their graves bear witness to the fact that there was some belief in life after death, since they acted on that belief. As the ages passed, clearer signs can be found of that faith. They not only buried the dead, but they made careful preparation for them to have familiar things with them in that strange new world to which they were going.

1. Von Ogden Vogt, Cult and Culture (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1951) p. 154

E. Sources of Study: Burial Deposits

It is not until the Upper Paleolithic Period is reached that true man appears, but even in the earlier stages there seems to have been some kind of burial procedure. Perhaps it is reading into the ancient past some of the mentality of a later age to state that the few bones that have been found dating to Chellean times were actual burials. There are too few remains, and these are too scattered for any clear inferences to be drawn.¹ By the next stage, however, all the human bones found have with them flint flakes and cores, and stone implements definitely shaped, seeming to point to some type of intentional burial. It is interesting that cores are found with the flint chips. Dr. Zeuner demonstrated at Jericho the characteristics of flint: to flake off in the same way that the first flint flake is chipped. The large piece of flint is cut at one end to the desired shape; after that all the chips from that block follow the same pattern.² Of course one could say that it did not take much intelligence to pound stones; certainly the Acheulians did not have much intelligence! But they were making discoveries and feeling after something, and perhaps without knowing why, they buried a man's things with him. It may have been nothing more than to get his possessions out of their way, but it was a starting point for progress.³

In the next, the Miquoquian Era, there is direct evidence of intentional burial. There are artificial ditches in which a number of bodies have been buried, sometimes with a covering of small stones put in before the ditches were filled up. In the trench with them, but in no apparent careful order, are found flints and stones similar to those of the earlier age, with the addition of necklaces of bear teeth, and some bone and horn implements.⁴

For the Middle Paleolithic or Mousterian Period, there are clearer records. This is the period of the Neanderthal Man, with his large head, retreating brow, massive brow ridges, and short neck. He is not considered

1. Schmucker, op. cit., p. 51.

2. At Jericho Excavations in 1955.

3. Frederick Edward Zeuner, "Quaternary," Ency. Brit. (1955), XVIII, 834.

4. C. H. Luquet, The Art and Religion of Pre-Historic Man, trans. S. T. Russell, Jr. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1930), p. 151.

a direct ancestor of man, but an aberrant sideline.¹ However, he left his influence on man's development. His remains are found in many places in Europe, with objective evidence of his belief in continuing existence after death, of the same type as the life on earth. Not only were his weapons and implements buried with him, but food and a variety of ornaments as well.

The interest becomes evidence of real affection when we consider how, as at La Ferassie, flat stones had been laid over the head and shoulders to protect them, and in the case of the youth buried at Le Moustier, the head had been laid on a pillow of flint chippings. In the case of the interment at La Chapelle-aux-Saints a hearth, from its position in relation to the grave, inevitably suggests burial rites and a funeral feast, in which the dead was believed to take a part.

But in other cases, possibly for reasons similar to those on account of which men are loved or disliked today, there is evidence which may be interpreted as a desire to put the dead man out of sight as quickly as possible. And this may very easily have passed over into fear of the power of his spirit to return and work evil.²

Sometimes the Mousterian dead were buried in a trussed-up style, their knees under their chins, often with remains of leather straps by which they had been tied in that position. Various attempts have been made to interpret the procedure. One idea is that it was an attempt to make it impossible for the ghosts to return to earth--analogy from later burials in uncivilized lands.³ Another suggestion: this is the embryonic position, indicating death as a birth into another world.⁴ It is doubtful if they knew enough of anatomy in those early years for this meaning to occur to them. A more factual idea is that the body took up less space that way, and when they had to dig graves the soil was often rocky and difficult. But contracted burials are also to be found in caves. The fact remains; the interpretation is not sure.

1. Zeuner, op. cit.

2. James Y. Simpson, Man and the Attainment of Immortality (New York: George H. Doran Company, 1922), p. 116.

3. Simpson, ibid., p. 117.

4. Bruce Bryan, "San Nicholas Island, Treasure House of the Ancients," Art and Archaeology, 31(1930), 147.

The famous Cromagnon Man, almost human, belongs to the first age of the Upper Paleolithic Period, the Aurignacian. He is thought to have entered Europe from Asia, bringing his culture with him. His remains are found in all parts of the Eastern Hemisphere. Graves were prepared for the dead either in caves or in artificially-dug sepulchers, with a floor of stones dyed red, or sometimes with only the stones under the head having the coloring. Often the corpse was covered with a "shroud of shells." With him were buried his weapons and implements, bored reindeer horns, tubes of bone filled with the prevalent red dye, bracelets and anklets made of shell and perforated teeth. There were also bones and stones decorated with incised lines, rough but recognizable statuettes and figurines, and crude sketches in the caves. This Cromagnon is almost a man! He stands erect, but his forehead is too low to suggest much development in the higher powers of the brain. Yet he is accomplished in skills, and shows signs of development in the arts.¹

F. Possible Burial and Other Ceremonial Rites

In the next, the Solutrian Age, true man appears. He has advanced along all lines. His skills show power to reason—he probably knows what he is doing and may even understand why he is doing it! To this period belong the amazing paintings and sculptures in the dark recesses of caves in southern France and Spain. These show no signs of being burials, but were too far back in the darkness to have meaning for everyday life. They may have had a connection with magic rites to insure successful hunting; or they may have to do with initiation rites into the tribe. This is merely guessing. However, at Malta, caves decorated similarly are definitely tombs for burial.²

The work on flints in the Solutrian Age is beautiful, and the figurines both of animals and of human beings are artistically made. The graves are caves or artificially-dug pits lined with stones, and the body is usually protected from the weight of earth overhead by a "box" of stones constructed

1. H. O. Whitnall, The Dawn of Mankind (Boston: The Gotham Press, 1924) p. 183.

2. Norbert Casteret, "Lascaux Cave, Cradle of World Art," Nat. Geog. Mag. 94(1948), 771 ff.

in fashion somewhat similar to that of the dolmens of a later period. Here is found multiple burial, with orientation. In some graves the bodies are all turned toward the east, in others they are all facing west. Just what this means is unknown, but there must have been some ceremonial or ritual significance, and there must have been some reason back of the careful preparation of the body for burial--some thought of a continued existence either in the grave or in some spirit world to which not only the person himself departed, but also to which he could take his implements and ornaments. If the dream analogy is pertinent, then there was a world where the hunter's hand would reach for the spear, and where the woman's cooking pot would find a celestial fire. Speculations cannot be pushed too far, but no matter how dimly, the prehistoric man must have sensed that life continued after death, similar to that on earth.¹

The latest period of the Paleolithic Era was the Magdalenian, in which man had advanced considerably, although the flint arrowheads and spear points are not so well shaped. He had a greater variety of interests and not so much time to spend on the flint. There are more sure signs of ritual here, for remains of funeral feasts are abundant. Artifacts are now found not only in the grave, but also in piles of rubbish known as "kitchen middens." These tell of the utensils used in cooking, and something of the food. But for the present inquiry, it is still the burials that furnish evidence. In many of the graves of this period only skulls are buried, and sometimes only the top of the skull, cut in the shape of a shallow bowl. In other places skeletons are found buried with the heads missing. This seems a strange development. It may have been handed down from ages past, for some of the earliest excavations have produced skulls only. Sometimes there are found multiple burials of heads alone, and again a cache of bowl-shaped skulls.² One can but wonder what these people were thinking about as they laid the dead away in what seems a very strange, and for the most part abhorrent fashion. Herodotus writing of curious Scythian customs of a much later period, but suggestive,

1. Whitnall, op. cit., p. 191

2. Whitnall, ibid., p. 204.

says that they used the skulls of their enemies as drinking cups, and at their feasts recounted the feats by which the skulls were acquired.¹

There is danger of interpreting ancient signs in the light of modern thought. We need to know the background to place ourselves back in that era--if possible.²

But the exercise of the historic imagination is difficult in this situation, so different from anything in present culture. One suggestion is that this prevalence of skull burials shows that the skull was thought to possess some kind of magic, so that the people would be benefited by keeping it.³ Just how the benefit would work is not suggested. Another interpretation: as a ritual of cannibalism, with the reminder that such act was a religious rite among the known cannibal tribes of recent years, no doubt an inheritance from very early times. The eating of the body would transfer some of the characteristics of the deceased to the living ones; or perhaps eating the body would give continuing life to the deceased in the lives of the living people. A similar but slightly different thought is that there was a "cult of the skull" and that the cranium was used as a libation bowl for offerings, or as a very special drinking cup in a ritual ceremony. Drinking blood out of the skull as a symbol of life has been suggested, and this might be connected with the use of red ochre in burials: red, the color of blood, suggests life.⁴ It must be remembered that this is all speculation.

Many cup-hollows around the graves suggest libation also. Just what the libations were, and what ceremonies accompanied the pouring, are unknown. Water, milk, wine, oil, and blood have all been suggested. But this is mere conjecture. M. Leonhardt divides the possible rites into two types: the positive and the negative. For the positive rites he lists music, both vocal

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1. Herodotus, "Curious Scythian Customs," trans., Rawlinson, 1858. Library of the World's Best Literature, ed. Charles Dudley Warner (New York: R. S. Peale and J. A. Hall, Publishers, 30 Vols., 1897), XIII, 7296.
 2. Msgr. A. Bros, "Apercu Historique sur L'Histoire des Religiones," Histoire des Religiones, op. cit., I, 102.
 3. E. S. Hartley, "Death and Disposal of the Dead," Ency. Rel. & Eth., IV, 443.
 4. Charles W. Harris, The Hebrew Heritage (New York: The Abingdon Press, 1935), p. 42.

and instrumental, and dancing; for the negative, mourning and fasting, with gestures of tearing clothes and putting ashes on the head.¹ All of these are practices suggested by ceremonies of a later period, and are at best mere speculations.

A great mass of facts has been accumulated, but when it comes to making deductions, the interpretations are not on very solid ground. It is all so very far in the past, so entirely out of the field of any present experience. Yet it seems very clear that as St. Augustine found it in his day:

Thou hast made us for Thyself, and our hearts are
restless until they rest in Thee.²

so man's prehistoric ancestors must have felt. There was a "dynamic force within him urging him to something beyond."³ and there is still that force within men of the present day, urging constantly on to higher things. To that extent at least it is possible to use the historic imagination and share the thoughts of primitive man. People are never satisfied; there is always something farther ahead, some sight to see a little more clearly, something better to do, something to be more fully understood. It is a God-given trait that has made possible the growing culture of the race.

1. C. H. Luquet, op. cit., p. 102.

2. St. Augustine, Confessions, I, 1.

3. Sabine Baring-Gould, Origin and Development of Religious Belief (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 2 Vols., 1870), I, 56.

CHAPTER IV

THE NEOLITHIC PERIOD

12,000--5,000 B.C.

A. Stone-Age Life Extensive

The Neolithic Period is divided into three parts: the Lower, Middle, and Upper, just as the Paleolithic Period was. The Lower Neolithic is a transition period, and is sometimes called Epipaleolithic, and sometimes Mesolithic. The customs in use in the earlier period continue to be found in this one. There is more to guide the student now, for as the ages move nearer to the present time there are more remains. Burials are found in sufficient numbers for generalization, and in condition well preserved for study. This was before the days of writing, so that it is still necessary to exercise ingenuity in interpreting the meanings. If there could have been any form of communication other than the spoken word, no records of it have been found.

Discoveries of the last few years have disclosed evidence of Stone-Age life all around the Mediterranean, and fringing its shores as did the government of the Roman Empire thousands of years later. There was an extensive Near Eastern world of early Stone-Age men, embracing North Africa and western Asia, forming a vast stage whose footlights in front stretched from the Black Sea on the north through Syria and Palestine to the cataracts of the upper Nile on the south, and whose backstage perspective is deepened by the drop-curtain of the Persian mountains.¹

Evidences of the development of civilization in the years immediately past the Paleolithic stage are found all over the Eastern Hemisphere, although they may have been concentrated around the Mediterranean basin, due to the climatic conditions.

In Palestine this period is known as Natufian, because the first deposits of the period that were found were at Mugharet-es-Shubka in Wady-en-Natufa

1. Breasted, op. cit., p. 4.

in western Judea, and took the name of that region.¹ In North Africa there was a Pre-Dynastic Egyptian civilization known as Capsian, which had great influence on southern Europe and on the islands of the Mediterranean Sea. Conditions were very much alike everywhere. The people used the same sort of materials and lived under similar conditions. Any differences were usually merely local.

B. Careful Burial of the Dead

In the Neolithic Period much more elaborate burial customs were developed than in the earlier times. In some places these were so very pronounced that a "cult of the dead" has been posited, the beginnings of which were found in the preceding era. This cult was apparently motivated by a desire to benefit the living rather than for the deceased. There was probably a desire to gain something from the one who had gone on ahead of them, if they were friendly; or on the other hand, there was the felt need to ward off any evil influence of those considered enemies.

Apparently the dead were thought of as having the same type of life beyond the grave as when they lived on earth, and that life took on an added significance. In fact, the belief in life after death and the preparation for that life seem to be the dominating factors in the organization of that period, and there are unmistakable evidences that burial of the dead had become a sacred obligation.

There can be no doubt that the religion of these pre-historic peoples as disclosed by their sepulchral remains involved a belief in intercommunication between mankind and the supernatural world. Death was the portal to the community of departed heroes and friends to which they looked forward across the space of human life with a hopeful anticipation of a more perfect state of existence. Hence the abodes of the dead were considered of greater importance than those of the living.³

1. Albright, op. cit., pp. 58,59.

2. Graham and May, op. cit., pp. 26, 32.

3. R. Munro, "Death and Disposal of the Dead," Ency. Rel & Eth., IV, 465.

C. An Age of Giants

In almost every land there are myths and folk-tales about an age of giants. According to all these stories, there was a time when the size of men matched that of the dinosaurs and other prehistoric animals. There is a reflection of this in the Bible:

The Nephilim were on the earth in those days, and also afterward, when the sons of God came in to the daughters of men, and they bore children to them. These were the mighty men that were of old, the men of renown. (Gen.6:4)

The King James Version translates "Nephilim" as "giants" and as such they have long been considered, although measurement of skeletons found in these regions have given no evidence of large stature. There are references in the Bible to Nephilim, Rephaim, and others of local name: Emim in Moab, Zumin or Zamzumim in Ammon, and Anakim in southern Palestine, have all long been thought of as referring to clans of giants (Deut. 2:10,20). Their size was handed down as folk-tales to later generations:

You are to pass over the Jordan this day, to go in to dispossess nations greater and mightier than yourselves, cities great and fortified up to heaven, a people great and tall, the sons of the Anakim, whom you know and of whom you have heard it said, "Who can stand before the sons of Anak?" (Deut.9:1,2)

For only Og the king of Bashan was left of the remnant of the Rephaim; behold his bedstead was a bedstead of iron; is it not in Rabboth of the Ammonites? Nine cubits was its length, and four cubits its breadth, according to the common cubit. (Deut 3:11)

The bedstead of iron was an anacronism for iron was not in use at that time. And the size of Og was no doubt greatly exaggerated. Miss Dorothy Garrod has measured over one hundred skeletons of that period, and found that the average height was five feet five inches, quite small for a man rather than gigantic.¹

1. G. Ernest Wright, "Troglydites and Giants in Palestine," Journal of Biblical Literature, 52(1950), 305.

1. Megaliths

The tales of giants have strong validation in the megalithic monuments found in all parts of the world: north, south, east, west, in highlands, on the lowlands, and even in remote islands of the sea, there are huge buildings that could be built with difficulty by modern machinery, which were piled by men of prehistoric times. France has been called the "classic land of the dolmen" because these megalithic piles are found there more than in any other land. They were undoubtedly tombs, but the bones found within do not seem to have been placed in any specific order. In many of them are seen cremated remains, but bones are often found in the same dolmen. It has been suggested that the cremation may have been accidental rather than intentional, the result of failing to put out the fires of funeral feasts.¹ These huge stones are roughly dressed, and not always regularly placed. They give the impression of giant children piling building blocks. Sometimes there are three or more standing stones, making two or three rooms of a cell-like type. Sometimes these are entirely open, sometimes they are closed at one end. Occasionally, when there are two or more rooms, roughly-squared holes have been cut between. At times they are flat upon the ground; at other times they are set up on a platform of rough stones. Sometimes they have a mound of earth piled over them and at other times they stand bare. In Germany and Poland the stones are much rougher than in France, perhaps because they were of a different type of rock, not so easily shaped. In Scandinavia no bones have been found inside the dolmens, but the burials are in the ground underneath, with these heavy piles on top of them.²

If France is the "classic land" of the dolmen, Jordan can stand next in line, if not rival her. Dr. Glueck expressed it in very vigorous terms: "I have seen these dolmens by their hundreds and thousands littering the entire length of Transjordan."³ He continues, reconstructing in his imagination

1. Vere Gordon Childe, The Dawn of Civilization (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1925), p. 204.

2. Whitnall, op. cit., p. 232.

3. Nelson Glueck, The River Jordan (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1946), p. 130.

the building of these strange monuments. The slabs measure approximately 7 x 5 x 2; none of them are entirely regular. Four of these large slabs are cut, and two more somewhat smaller. A circular platform of stone blocks has been built, and these great slabs are tipped and turned over again and again, usually on an uphill road, until they are brought to the base of the platform, and then on rollers are pushed up a dirt incline to the top. One of the stones is laid flat, two others are set up lengthwise on their narrow side, about three feet apart, and then the fourth great stone is heaved up and laid over them for a roof. The ends are sealed with smaller slabs or left open. In Palestine, no bones at all have been found in the dolmens, and there is no sign of occupancy except as later strolling nomads have used them for shelter from the semi-occasional storms that come up suddenly. Why they were built is a mystery. Ernest Babelon says, "Cyclopean masonry, no doubt built by those giants, the Rephaim and the Anakim, who were the first inhabitants of that region."¹ Père Vincent has a similar idea, and adds that they were probably funeral monuments, and that one may speculate upon the rites to which they pertain. Their construction is so elemental that the rites were no doubt simple also. He calls attention to an Arabic custom that may have come down from the very ancient past, of placing around a venerated tomb a circle of stones, having at the opening a miniature dolmen to serve as an altar for the sacrifice, suggesting that this may be an indication of the use made of these earlier megaliths. Holes found in the floor of nearly all of them may be cup-holes for libations.²

At Amrit, belonging to a later age certainly, but perhaps an inheritance from these early days, there are huge monuments of solid construction, with graves underneath.³ It could well be that these dolmens were of the same type, monuments over graves. Significance for such construction has been suggested in that, in the very earliest burials the body was laid under the hearthstone at home, indicating in this way that there was a desire to keep the loved one

1. Ernest Babelon, Manual of Oriental Antiquities, trans., B. T. A. Evans (New York: George Putnam, 1889), p. 230

2. LeP. Hughes Vincent, Canaan (Paris: Librairie Vincent LeCoffre, 1907) p.408.

3. The author saw these and also the dolmens in Palestine, 1954-1955.

near; but later these huge stones were placed over the corpse, buried at a distance, so as to weight down the body and keep the ghosts from escaping.¹

Dr. Glueck joins Père Vincent in thinking that these were memorials, remarking that they have made their memory endure for some 7500 years, and may easily last for ten millennia more.² Perhaps this would mean that these people thought memory on earth essential.

Dr. Handcock has another theory. He quotes Dr. Spoer that these were altars, and takes exception to that. They were too tall to be reached well for altars, even by giants, and since the top stone was not often level, its use as an altar would not be very fitting. He thinks that they were "homes" for the dead.³ Dr. Glueck concurs in this and adds that not only are there many dolmens in the hill country east of the Jordan River, but that one also finds the remains of the homes of these ancient builders--sturdy remains because of the gigantic buildings. They also were made of large slabs of rock with heavy stone ceilings. He concludes that these men must have been of low stature to have lived in them but of powerful frame to have made them, giants not in height but in strength. Since the dolmens so nearly resembled their own homes he thinks that these ancient men built them as "homes" for the departed.⁴ That would seem to indicate homes on earth rather than in some place beyond the sky or under ground--more natural perhaps, since it was familiar country that they saw in their dreams.

But dolmens are not the only kind of megalithic monuments. There are many menhirs, single standing-stones which may originally have marked burial sites. Later these seem to have been used as shrines, but originally they were probably burial stones or memorials. Because offerings were made for the dead here, they may have become general altars. Sometimes they stood alone, and sometimes in groups arranged in rows or in circles. Their remains are found in many parts of the world.⁵

1. Graham and May, op. cit., p. 4.

2. Glueck, The River Jordan, p. 130.

3. P. S. P. Handcock, The Archaeology of the Holy Land (London: T. Fisher Unwin, Ltd., 1916), p. 18.

4. Glueck, "Explorations in Eastern Palestine", p. 190.

5. Ibid.

These standing-stones are found in great numbers in Brittany. At Carnac there are long files of megalithic monuments arranged in military precision. Their builders are thought to have been part of a great prehistoric migration starting from Asia and moving across Europe.

(Brittany) stands unrivaled as the land of these strange megaliths . . . in which a prehistoric race, a people apparently of considerable civilization and intense religious feeling, seem to have striven titanically toward self-expression, and to have left, after all, a great but almost unintelligible cry . . . the work of men agonizing to the end that they and their dead should never be forgotten.¹

England has its share of the megalithic monuments also, and recent studies have pushed the dating back to Neolithic time. At Avebury near Marlborough is Silbury Hill, an earth mound which is admittedly the largest artificial hill in Europe.

Avebury itself is said to constitute the greatest megalithic monument in Europe, and nowhere in the world are tumuli more plentiful than in Great Britain. On the banks of the Boyne is a pyramid of stones which, had it been situated on the Nile, would probably have been pronounced the oldest and most venerable of the pyramids. . . . The earliest British shrines were merely stones or caves, or holy wells, or sacred trees, or tumuli, preferably on a hilltop or in a wood. . . . Later came stone circles and megalithic monuments.²

Most famous of these megalithic monuments in Great Britain is Stonehenge, situated eight miles south of Salisbury in Wiltshire. According to legend, these stones were magically transported from Ireland by Merlin. One can deny that tale, but cannot replace it with any clearer one. Excavations by the Society of Antiquaries of London have brought to light the fact that this strange monument has been built at several successive times, the earliest dating back to the Neolithic era. This dating has been tested and confirmed

1. Charles Buxton Going, "The Mysterious Prehistoric Monuments of Brittany," Nat. Geog. Mag., 44(1923), 53.

2. Harold Bayley, Archaic England (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippencott Company, 1920), p. 29.

by radio-active carbon tests. Stonehenge consists of thirty standing-stones, averaging eighteen feet in height, in a circle ninety feet in diameter, with stone lintels on top. Cremated human bones have been found in some of the holes there, which place these definitely as burial sites; but the situation would lead one to think that this was an early--perhaps the earliest--type of chapel. Certainly it was used as a chapel by the Druids of a later time.¹

In Scandinavia, and other countries of northern Europe, the megalithic monuments usually took the form of long barrows of earth, under which were multiple burials. These were surrounded by a trench, and a circle of stones. Sometimes the earth was smoothed over them, and at other times left rough, or strewn with rocks. Burial was usually in a sitting or "squatting" position, a position of rest for those people in life who do not have chairs. Some of them were laid on their side. Probably they were buried in the garments that they wore in life. In the latter part of the period they were wrapped in straw mats, and toward the end of it, some of them were buried in a sort of casket made from a hollow tree trunk. Some of the sailors were placed in their canoes for burial.²

These gigantic structures are found all around the world. For a long time it was thought that America was a "New World" because it apparently awaited discovery until the close of the Middle Ages. But archaeological excavations have uncovered signs of Neolithic, and possibly Paleolithic human life. At Cuicuilco in southern Mexico, massive ruins have been found, buried under a lava flow at least seven thousand years ago, which must have come as suddenly as that of Pompeii. There is a truncated cone with a flat top, perhaps for ceremonial dancing, and a huge altar in the shape of a horseshoe. The workmanship is crude and the decorations meager. There seems to be more difference than kinship with the monuments of the Eastern Hemisphere, but at the same time, the work "expresses the aspirations of the whole human race in its attempts to solve the mysteries of the universe."³ An archaic cemetery

1. R. C. C. Clay, "Stonehenge," Ency. Brit. (1946), XXI, 438,439.

2. R. Munro, op. cit., p. 465.

3. Byron Cummings, "Ruins of Cuicuilco May Revolutionize our History of Ancient America," Nat. Geog. Mag., 44(1923), 2, 203.

under the same lava flow has been excavated, and many skeletons have been found, surrounded by their simple utensils: bowls, pots, and dishes of stone or baked clay, obsidian knives, and little figurines which were probably fetishes to protect their fields or ward off evil.¹

Down in Bolivia there is a large ruin thought of as the "Stonehenge" of the Americas. Menhirs and dolmens are found here, similar to those of the Near East and Europe, probably the remains of the tombs of heroes. There is a huge mound which was apparently a Temple to the Sun God, with a covered gallery facing the rising sun. This was lost beneath the drifting sand for centuries. Later peoples have removed many of the stones for their own building purposes, so a complete picture is impossible. This was built so long ago that there is no memory of it in their mythology.²

There is no way of knowing definitely why and how these ancient men dragged such enormous stones for their buildings. There might have been something in the psychology of an infant race that demanded huge things. When tiny tots are given toys, they are usually large ones. One would think that small ones, the right size for tiny hands, would be best. But even though their hands are little, they do not seem to be able to handle little things. It may be that there was something of that kind in the mentality of these Neolithic men. But certainly they must have been strong men to manage these great stones! Someone has also made the suggestion that they must have been friendly souls, helping one another in the work, or they could never have accomplished the task.

2. Microflints

Strangely enough, the age that produced the huge megaliths also developed the very small microflints. Flint arrowheads and spear heads, flint sickles and knives, had been in use for an exceedingly long time, and continued to be used for years, even after metal tools were known. Most of them were large:

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1. Sylvanus Griswold Morley, "Unearthing America's Ancient History," Nat. Geog. Mag., 60(1931), 106.
 2. Stewart E. McMullen, "The Heart of Aymara Land--Oldest City of the New World," Nat. Geog. Mag., 52(1927), 218.

hand-axes fitted for large hands, though filed to a sharp edge. But there was a time during the Neolithic Age when the very tiny flint tools were a specialty. The period of their use is given as 12,000-8,000 B.C., so at the same time that men of powerful build were piling the heavy stones into dolmens, men of finely-coordinated nerves were fashioning and using these tiny flint tools, using them for the working of bone and leather, for boring holes in tiny beads, for carving on stone and bone.¹ Some of their implements were long, with the tiny, sharp microflints set into a wooden back, or wooden handle. They began to have a feeling for decoration, for beauty. Their stone vessels were more smoothly finished, some of them highly polished. Mecklaces were made of bird bones and bears' teeth. One child was buried with a cap made of the toe bones of a gazelle.²

D. Stone-Age People Still Living in Remote Places

Now it is only from wax figures in museums that we commonly get any hint of how our Neolithic ancestors lived. . . . The bald truth is that Neolithic man has not vanished entirely. In certain far nooks and crannies of the world he lives now just as primitively as he did uncounted thousands of years ago. I found him just so when I alighted from a plane before a cannibal camp of New Guinea and was mistaken for a god!³

The opening reception of Mr. Brandes as a "god" gave him the privilege of learning much about the tribe, even of attending one of their secret rites. Skulls had a special part in these rites, and are found grinning from poles all through the jungle. Widows wear their husbands' thigh-bones as collars around their necks, or as panniers at their waists, but the significance of such practice was not made clear to him. These people did not have flint arrowheads, but tipped their arrows with the bony toenails of the great cassowary, or used the spiny dorsal fins of fish.⁴

1. W. F. Albright, *op. cit.*, p. 59.

2. These can be seen in the Palestine Museum in Jerusalem, and elsewhere.

3. E. W. Brandes, "Into Primeval Papua by Seaplane," *Nat. Geog. Mag.*, 56(1929), 253.

4. Brandes, *ibid.*, pp. 295, 298.

Here in New Guinea also, "one of the world's last pockets of Stone-Age men," the making of stone axes is a special secret art. A flint-hard stone is ground steadily for three months to make the blade; this is fastened to a wooden handle by a "matting" of orchid stems. This country is a paradise of rare birds, and the men are splendidly arrayed in crowns and hip-garlands of bright bird feathers, with scarab beetles and cowrie shells used as jewels. Without any written language, they pass on to succeeding generations their tribal lore by the mad rhythm of their dance and their weird chants.¹

In central Australia there is also a tribe of people living as their ancestors did in the Stone Age. - They wear no clothes and in cold weather carry blazing "fire sticks" or torches to keep warm. They have only five types of implements, all crude and either of stone or wood. They are haunted by the fear of evil spirits, and since this is largely a desert land, their chief religious ceremony is a rain-making ritual, a sort of sympathetic magic. Their most sacred objects are smooth boulders from which they think spirit children come, seeking the women they want for their mothers; and they greatly fear broken boulders, thinking that deformed and unhealthy children find their way to earth through them. Their artists paint on the walls of hidden caves a mythical kangaroo-man, which they think was their ancestor, and which they worship. These paintings are more crude than those found in the caves of France and Spain.²

In northern Australia there is also an aboriginal tribe living a sort of communal life with a minimum of possessions. They bury the dead wrapped in bark, and placed in niches high up in rocks to protect them from the elements and from animals. They are not very successful, judging by the older graves, where there is a jumbled array of bones, showing evident disturbance, probably by prowling animals. Secret ritual ceremonies are held in a small oval clearing surrounded by carved and painted poles. Here a two-week ceremony is conducted from time to time, where they reenact their

1. E. Thomas Gilliard, "New Guinea's Rare Birds and Stone-Age Men," Nat. Geog. Mag., 103(1953), 441-488.

2. Charles P. Mountford, "Earth's Most Primitive People," Nat. Geog. Mag. 89(1946), 89-112.

ancient legends in song and dance, depicting the epic deeds of their ancestors who "lived when the world was young." This may give an indication of the way some of the legends of other lands have been handed down through the ages before men could communicate through the written word.¹ They also do crude painting on bark with stubby sticks for brushes, a sort of X-ray art, showing the skeletons of the animals as well as the outer forms.² Back in the more remote caves can be found a different form of art, which they claim is not the work of their ancestors, but of a mythical race known as "Mimi." All these drawings bear a remarkable resemblance to the pictures found in the Lascaux caves of Europe. Quartsite scrapers fastened to wooden handles by pitch, and hatchets of Stone-Age design, found in the caves, are considered to have been tools of these mythical creatures.³

E. Implements "Killed" for Burial

It is probable that from the beginning all of a man's possessions were buried with him at his decease, and that there was a feeling against using them. Later this was probably cut down to a selection of things, although the number and variety of things buried with the dead grew with the passing years. The time came when the warrior's horse and the hunter's dog were buried with their owners; how early the social organization included slaves and servants, and when these came to be buried with their masters is uncertain. It was very prevalent in later years, and may have had a beginning here. It is not at all unusual to find at this time, as became quite customary later, that the bow of the hunter was broken, and also his spear and hunting knife, in order to accompany him to his new home. They had to be "killed" that their spirits might be freed for the journey. Apparently inanimate things had spirits of their own, but whether these were put into them when they were made, or were acquired through use, it is impossible to say.⁴

1. Charles P. Mountford, "Exploring Stone-Age Arnheim," Nat. Geog. Mag., 96(1949), 745-782.

2. Leonard Adam, Primitive Art (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1954), pp. 156, 157.

3. Mountford, ibid.

4. Edward Washburn Hopkins, Origin and Evolution of Religion (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1924), p. 110.

F. Types of Burial

In the earlier Paleolithic Period there were some indications of possible cremation. In this later age there is one sign of that type of burial. In Gezer, beside a very large standing-stone, there was a crematorium, with many cup-holes around it. This was in a cave entered by a narrow stairway, with a chimney on one side, and nearby a pile of human bones burned to ashes. A space was cut twelve inches deep with a border roughly rectangular and curbed with stone marked by dot-and-dash lines, containing ashes of the dead, with amulets and beads. The burned bodies were left in position on the floor, layer upon layer of ashes, and were not collected in any way to be placed in a columbarium, as a later age and the use of pottery would have decreed. As this is the only evidence of cremation in all of Palestine during the Neolithic times, it may have been a place of human sacrifice instead.¹

Tombs were often family sepulchers, or perhaps belonged to the whole clan. This would be natural when the many large caves found in the hillsides were used; but indications of the same type of burial are found even when the tombs were dug in the ground. Many skeletons are found, often with a profusion of bones in a jumble, which would seem to indicate secondary burial, the bones being placed there after the flesh had decayed by either natural or artificial methods. Several methods of decaying the flesh are known to have been in use in later periods, but nothing is known of it in this age. That it was done, however, is deduced from the condition of the bones.²

While there was reverence for the dead, there was also the feeling of fear regarding them, since anything mysterious such as death would lead to that feeling. Most of the burials were now away from the homes, out on the hillsides, sometimes in dug graves, and sometimes in the caves, but there were still some burials at home, particularly under the hearth or at the threshold. In this connection there is an interesting analogy suggested by Dr. Harris. He speaks of the amusing custom of carrying the bride over the

1. J. Garrow Duncan, Digging Up Biblical History (New York: The Macmillan Company, 2 Vols., 1931), pp. 54,55, Vol. I.

2. G. Ernest Wright, "Additional Remarks on Ancient Burial Customs," Bib. Arch., 8(1945), p. 17.

threshold on her wedding day or on the return from the honeymoon, as dating back to this period when burials were under the threshold, and great care must be taken not to step on them! He also relates the "keeper of the threshold" of the Temple in Jerusalem to this ancient burial procedure, saying that his duty seems to have been to keep anybody from stepping there, since that spot was held sacred from this early and perhaps already forgotten burial custom.¹ However, the translators of the Revised Standard Version of the Bible have not considered any such analogy, for they have translated the word "threshold" as "storehouse" which would entail a very different type of duty. (Neh.12:25)

Caves continued to be used for burial, but often with artificial cuttings as well as the natural ones. It seems to have been a custom to cut channels from one cave to another, and to cut niches within large caves for single burials. At Ophel, near Jerusalem, a flat ledge of rock inside a cave had been used for a full length burial of a chief, or a man of some particularly high standing, placed in a casing of mud plaster. A tunnel had been cut, leading to a nearby cave. This was done frequently, reaching the next cave at a higher or lower level. The tunnel was often apparently started at both caves, the men working until they met. Usually the passage was very narrow at the center. It must have been long, slow work, for their only tools, judging from those left behind, were flint hammers and axes.²

Similar caves with connecting passages were used as tombs in Spain and also in Portugal. In Malta, even at this early period, there were many complicated sepulchral galleries underground, with walls decorated, and often a pillar left or erected to support the roof. Minoan tombs were sometimes built above ground, but with an apparent attempt to make the roof like that of the caves. They were built of layers of stone, each course projecting a little inward until they met at the top in a false vault. This gave a beehive effect. The entrance was by a narrow door, with two monolithic uprights supporting a massive lintel. Small rectangular bone enclosures were often

1. Charles W. Harris, The Hebrew Heritage (New York: The Abingdon Press, 1935) p. 51.

2. J. Garrow Duncan, op. cit., I, 36.

built onto the side. The chambers were very large and frequently held more than a hundred corpses, being used continually through the years. Corbelled vaults of the earliest dynasties in Egypt provide an exact replica of these beehives, even to the accessory chambers built on the outside. The beehive tomb spread to Spain, France, Brittany, Holland, and even to Great Britain and Ireland.¹

G. Evidences of Burial Ritual

Multiplied instances of careful burial and elaborate tombs suggest that there must have been some ritual connected with internment. In the earlier period there was found evidence of burial or memorial feasts held at the gravesite, and these are also found in the Neolithic age. In later ages the custom of holding burial feasts was almost universal, and they may have had their beginning far back in antiquity. There was no doubt the belief that the deceased was able to share the meal with them.

Indication of some type of libation ceremony also is given by the many cup-holes found in nearly all burial spots. The libations could have been wine, milk, oil, or even water, which was a very precious commodity in all of the desert sections of the country. These would be either for the gods, or for the dead, perhaps even for both.

Cup hollows are found on the rock surface of the Neolithic Period all through Palestine, some on the surface, others down in caves. They vary in size from eight feet to one and a half in diameter, and from twenty-four inches to mere saucer depressions in depth. They also vary in shape: circular, oval, rectangular, almost square, with sides either sloping or straight. They were possibly cut by flint. All have been smoothed by friction, no doubt by hand-grinders, of which many are found. These have been used from the earliest period, not by the Semites, but by their predecessors, the cave-dwellers. . . . They were probably a part of worship, either of Nature, or of the shades of the dead. In some cases channels led down into caves which may have been tombs.²

1. Childe, op. cit., pp. 31, 108.

2. Duncan, op. cit., I, 39.

H. Excavations in Jericho

Excavations in Jericho have reached early Neolithic levels that throw new light upon that distant age. The most extraordinary discoveries were plastic statues of human beings, apparently occurring in groups, with man, woman, and child in each group. They were made by covering a reed framework with lime marl, about two-thirds life-size in the face, but very thin in profile. They look like nothing known from earlier or later periods. The eyes were made of sea shell, there was a mere nub of a nose, and a tiny mouth. There were also whiskers incised around the chin of the man.¹ Skeleton heads covered with plaster were also found, and in 1956 two more such heads were unearthed from the same area.² What they were made for and how they were used is unknown. There is nothing like them anywhere else to help in appraisal.

In this age people were beginning to live in cities, and the first walled city known on earth at the present time has been excavated in the earliest Neolithic level at Jericho; in fact, there were two walled cities, separated by a period of abandonment. The carbon-14 dating places the more recent city far back before 6000 B.C.³

The most exciting find of the season always comes at the very last, and that is true this year . . . a solid round tower ten meters in diameter which suggested to me something like a ziggurat—a great artificial tower of the type built in Mesopotamia, probably to resemble a mountain. Its massiveness is of a most striking appearance. . . . This is extremely interesting, and may be rather miserable, because it may change our thinking! We should be finding a settlement of herdsmen and hunters, we have been thinking. But whether this is a citadel or part of an encircling wall, it does represent a highly-organized community, and such a community in this early time is unexpected.

The second most important find this year is that the remains of this extremely early occupation stretch from end to end of the tell, and so far as we know, from side to

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1. Albright, *op. cit.*, p. 63. Also seen in the Palestine Museum, Jerusalem.
 2. Patrick W. Skehan, Archaeological Newsletter of the American Schools of Oriental Research, Jerusalem, June 1956. (Mimeographed)
 3. Dorothy N. Marshall, F.S.A., F.S.A.Scott, in letter of March, 1956. Also reported in Father Skehan's Newsletter, *ibid.*

side as well. That means that the occupation area here was as large as the later town . . . something like eight acres in size, housing a population of three or four thousand people. A community of that size must have been very highly organized, from the point of view of feeding, if nothing else.¹

In the 1956 Excavation at Jericho, the round tower discovered in the closing week of the preceding year developed into a hitherto unknown type of burial vault.

The tower is perhaps the most spectacular thing; a fortnight ago an entrance on the top was found and steps leading down. Our excitement was intense and speculations of all sorts ran round and round. Down and down they went to twenty steps. They are dressed blocks of stone and the edges are worn smooth with the thousands of feet thousands of years ago. The walls are mud-plastered and one can see the finger-marks clearly there. They are steep. Hands and feet are needed. At the twentieth step the tunnel flattened out, presumably to the entrance which, alas, is bang against the side of the trench. In the tunnel was a jumble of skeletons.²

J. Beginnings of Agriculture and Pottery

Miss Kenyon emphasized the fact that this early Jericho Neolithic community must have been based on agriculture, for so large a group could not have been dependent on grain growing wild, and on the result of the hunt.³ Interestingly enough, the development of agriculture is credited to burials, the "gift of the dead." Frequently, in the earlier tombs, the grain for their food was placed loosely in the graves. When these were dug-graves, the seed sprouted and grew, and because the earth had been spaded up, a good seed-bed was developed for the growing grain. How soon men learned to bury the seed for a coming harvest, and the second step of digging up the ground before planting, is unknown; but it was some time in this ancient era, and it prepared the way for the greater development in the next age.⁴

1. Kathleen M. Kenyon, Stenographic report of her closing lecture at the Palestine Museum, Jerusalem, for the 1955 Excavation at Jericho.

2. Dorothy N. Marshall, op. cit.

3. Miss Kenyon, ibid.

4. Graham and May, op. cit., Introduction.

Toward the close of this age also they began to make pottery. One would think this a natural development, with clay at hand. At first they seem to have used it only for the making of little images, dried in the sun. Then when they found that these figurines would hold shape, they probably began making small vessels, drying them in the sun for use. Not many of these have been found, for they would break easily, but enough have been unearthed to show that this step was taken. Perhaps the first "fired" pot fell into the fire accidentally, and surprisingly was not destroyed, but given a permanent finish. At any rate, at some time toward the close of a long career, men of the Neolithic Age began to bake pottery. It was heavy and coarse, and very irregularly baked, since the first pots were baked in an open fire. At first only the outer surface was fired, but finally they learned how to arrange it so that the inner surface was fired also. At the end of the period they were attaching semicircular or triangular handles with tiny holes through. No attempt was made to cleanse the clay and the jars were crudely shaped by hand. For ornament there were crisscross lines and fingerprints, particularly on the handles and around the rims. It was crude, but it was a beginning, from which later ages developed beauty.¹

Neolithic man has thus taken up the torch handed him by his Paleolithic predecessor and kept it glowing on through the succeeding thousands of years. He has learned to build houses and decorate them. He has learned much of cooperative living and working. He has learned to control in some small degree the mystery of life, by the planting of seed and the harvesting of grain. He has learned to bake clay, fashioning vessels which must greatly have improved his culinary arrangements. His religious beliefs and ideals must still be inferred from his burial customs. He must have been aware of Powers higher than himself, of survival after death, and of the reality of the spiritual life. This can be recognized by his burials; this can also be more surely realized by the fact that it persisted in later years.

1. William F. Badé, "Ceramics and the History of Palestine," Journal of Biblical Literature, 50(1931), 3,4.

CHAPTER V

THE CHALCOLITHIC PERIOD 5,000—3,000 B.C.

A. Buried Cities Uncovered

The dates of the Chalcolithic Period show that it was of much shorter duration than the preceding periods. Ages are really measured by their accomplishments rather than by years. The people of this age progressed very much farther in their shorter time than those of the preceding periods with their long millennia. This will continue to be true as the ages pass, for one group begins where the other leaves off, building on all the culture of its predecessors. Neolithic man had begun to leave nomadic life and settle into villages, some even into cities. Some nomadic life, indeed, still continues to this present day, but the beginnings of sedentary life and agriculture started a new type of civilization on its way. Neolithic man had also learned how to make a crude type of pottery. These were both magnificent strides in culture which were valuable gifts to the next period.

With the opening of this era, the archaeologist has a great deal more to guide him in interpretation. He works very carefully and gives records that can be accepted with confidence. The explorers are finding what can literally be called buried worlds under the sands of time. Many ancient cities and towns were destroyed by wars and disappeared under the desert sands or the grass and other dense growth of the wilderness. Cities once widely known have been lost and forgotten for an unknown number of years until the archaeologist's spade uncovered them. André Parrot, who has spent years in the work, explains how the archaeologist goes about his task:

An archaeological expedition, however small, must be planned down to the last detail. . . . Once the surface layer has been removed, walls appear. They are easy to follow if built of stone or baked brick, but difficult to distinguish when the building material--the more perishable sun-dried brick or puddled clay--blends with the surrounding earth.

More often than not the ancient constructions have crumbled, worn by the elements and shattered by war and pillage. Then progress is slow, and sometimes smaller tools have to be used. Frequent pauses are necessary, to allow the earth to dry, so that by its coloring what is artificial may be distinguished from what is not. . . . This task, which becomes increasingly complicated as one approaches the totally unknown, needs a whole team of experts, who form the "staff" of the expedition.¹

B. The Age Characterized by the Use of Copper and Pottery

The development and use of pottery in this period was so important that some have suggested that its name should be called Ceramo-lithic instead of Chalcolithic. However, the discovery of copper, which belongs to this age exclusively, was as great if not a greater distinction, and it is that from which the period takes its name. Copper was the first of the metals to be in use, for it is found in free metallic state, and strength and hardness are increased by cold working. Crude implements could be made by beating the metal into the desired shape. Its keener and more durable edges, its bright reddish color, and its lasting quality made it highly prized. In seeking for more metal, it was found that the copper-bearing rocks would give up their precious contents if subjected to fire, and also that copper could be melted and cast into any desired shape. Thus the science of metallurgy was born.²

As early as 5000 B.C. weapons and implements left in the graves of Egypt were of copper. Copper mines were worked on Sinai by King Seneferu about 3000 B.C. and crucibles found there showed that the art of extracting the metal included some refining. Their skill had developed to a point where the copper was hammered into large sheets, rolled into pipes, or cut and moulded into various shapes for making all sorts of objects. Before 3000 B.C. copper was found on the island of Cyprus in such amounts that the name of that island was given to the metal. This affected the history of Cyprus, many of the nations having fought for control of her mines.³

1. André Parrot, Discovering Buried Worlds (New York: Philosophical Library, 1955), pp. 11, 16, 19.

2. John Philip Spielman, "Copper," Ency. Brit. (1955), VI, 413, 414.

3. Ibid.

Copper began to be used in Mesopotamia by the fifth millennium B.C. Tools and weapons formerly made only of wood, stone, clay, or bone, were then made of metal and were much more effective. This brought about a change in the whole social structure. The more dangerous weapons made greater need for protection, which affected their way of life. While an occasional walled city was found in Neolithic times, they became prevalent in this period. Life became more highly organized.

How early man learned to use fire is not known, but several stories of mythology center around it. Probably the first fire was due to lightning, so the myths that connect it with the gods can be understood. But men had to learn to use it. From the earliest times they no doubt used open fires, guarding the burning coals. The fires burning eternally on the altars no doubt came from this early need (Lev.6:12,13). They later learned to build chimneys back of their fire-pits. Some of the caves which were used for dwellings have holes cut to the open air, which were no doubt meant for chimneys, since ashes and charred fragments are found below. But in this period men learned to make ovens with air drafts to control the heat, sometimes of quite complicated construction. These were used for their metal working, and ovens of a similar kind were also built to fire their pottery, giving it a more regular finish. The pottery now shows both skill and beauty.

This evolution continued in a way that is remarkable when we bear in mind that every fresh development was an innovation, a new creation. The spirit of invention was given free rein. Although writing has not yet been discovered, it is certain that here and there thought is expressed, particularly in the pottery, whose ornamentation is a veritable language. It would be rash to claim that the key to it has been found, or that the combinations of markings have all an obvious significance. But it would be difficult to doubt the symbolic value of the bucrane, the swastika, the double axe, and the Maltese cross, already found in the fifth millennium B.C. and reproduced in the same form in the mid-twentieth century A.D. by national and popular leaders whose imaginations have been¹ unable to devise anything other than these oriental themes.

1. Badé, op. cit., p. 1.

1. Value of Pottery for Dating

Ben Sira in Ecclesiasticus speaks of the relative importance of craftsmen and scribes. The plowman and potter, the engraver of signets and the smith, were so important that "no city should be inhabited without them," but they would never be like the scribe, wanted in important councils (Ecclus. 38:24-34). Two thousand years have brought about a change and reversed Ben Sira's judgment, for certainly the ancient potter now sits above the scribes of old in the councils of the archaeologists; in fact, the potter has a message long before there was any scribe to write.

A great and varied company of ancient potters long ago gathered to their fathers, have acquired the posthumous distinction through the product of their handiwork. The use of ceramics as an auxiliary means to secure information about early human existence has in our time grown so important that the relevant literature on the subject sometimes refers to the "eloquence of potsherds."¹

In 1920 Sir Flinders Petrie began to introduce a systematic reporting of all finds, no matter how small, and to consider the use of pottery for dating purposes. A decade later he was to discover the fundamental principle of sequence dating, thanks to which it is possible to make use of relative chronology in periods where there are not any stratified remains for direct comparison. He produced positive proof that each period had its own typical pottery type, which could be distinguished by a trained eye from corresponding pottery of an earlier or later period. In particular he succeeded in giving rough absolute dates to several pottery periods by identifying certain wares found in datable burials. Others have carried this on to a veritable science.² Thus burial customs have contributed to the history of the time, for if people had not been so careful to place their pottery in the graves, there would be no such sure sequences for keeping track of dates. This type of dating begins at this time when pottery came into general use. With burial pottery dates, broken pieces found on dump heaps also have a tale to tell.

1. Parrot, op. cit., p. 67

2. Albright, op. cit., p. 29.

Pots, bowls, and lamps of earthenware break easily; there is nothing to do but discard them as waste. The utter worthlessness of broken pottery tempted neither its makers nor its breakers to carry it off. It was dropped and can be found in place today among the waste products of the day. A great amount of broken but imperishable pieces has peppered the layers of occupational deposits in cities and other ancient settlements with potsherds.¹

One trait of ancient people on which archaeologists count is adherence to custom. Changes come slowly; when there is any abrupt change in pottery style of any particular region, it is sure indication of historical significance.

2. Better Preservation of Funeral Remains

Pottery is responsible for the better preservation of funeral remains also. Pottery jars were used for infant burials regularly, sometimes with a fitted lid, and sometimes with an inverted bowl for a lid. There were also occasional jars made large enough for adult burial in contracted position. Here half-jars were made, one half being used for a lid, and the seam caulked with mud. Strangely enough, the unnecessary opening in the neck of the jar was left as though for regular use—perhaps it was not unnecessary. They may have continued to put offerings into the jar when they met for funeral feasts. Many of these jars could be seen at Byblos, which is a particularly helpful site from the standpoint of recognizing changing types of various eras. Here the stages of civilization can be seen side by side, instead of being found in layers so that one has to be destroyed in order to reach the lower level, as in most Palestinian sites. At Byblos all the Chalcolithic burials are in jars.² This is not the case everywhere, but there are many burials of this type. Even when pottery is not used, the bodies are often placed in contracted position. This suggests another reason for contracted burials, which could not refer to any earlier age, however. They might have wanted the same "style" even when they could not afford a pottery jar! It certainly was not any question of space, for often there was plenty of room.

1. Badé, *op. cit.*, p. 4.

2. Seen at Byblos, October, 1954.

3. Pottery "Killed" in the Tombs.

In the Neolithic age it was found that often the weapons such as bows, arrows, spears, and the like, were broken before being put in the tomb, and the reason was deduced that they had to be "killed" in order that their spirits would be freed for the next world. Now with the use of pottery, the same practice prevails. Not all of the broken pottery found in the caves and graves can be traced to earthquake, even though many of the tombs were in earthquake regions. Frequently when everything else was intact, much of the pottery had been broken. Sometimes instead it had been pierced with round holes, which shows that it was intentional. This may give some insight into the reason that objects of worship could be "idols of silver and gold, the work of men's hands (Psa.115:4). If even ordinary vessels of clay could acquire a "spirit" that must be freed, how much more those that were dedicated to the god! There is no indication of when this spirit was attained: at the time the article was made the creator or maker may have put his spirit into it; or when it was used it may have acquired a spirit from its owner. There may have been a ceremony of some kind by which these things were dedicated for service. In later ages the seed was blessed before it was planted, which seems part of the same process. But this is only speculation.¹

The custom of breaking the articles put into the graves seems to have been world-wide. Far on the other side of the globe, in the jungles of Central America this custom was found:

Most of the objects brought up were in fragments. Probably they were votive offerings broken before being thrown into the well as a ritualistic act performed by the priests. . . . We have reason to believe that these jade pendants, gold disks, and other ornaments of metal or stone, when broken, were considered to have been killed . . . that their spirits might serve as ornaments to the messenger, whose spirit would be appropriately adorned when it finally appeared before the Hunal Ku, the One Supreme God of the Heavens.²

1. Bryan, op. cit., p. 154.

2. Ceram, op. cit., p. 389, quoting E. G. Thompson.

C. More Elaborate Tombs

Chalcolithic tombs of this period are distinctive for their vestibule entrances. Frequently the bodies were laid on a sort of shelf, with niches above them to hold lamps, and perhaps other things beside.¹ One of the very earliest and most prevalent use of pottery seems to have been for lamps. The earliest ones were just bowls holding oil or fat of some kind, into which a piece of coarse cloth was placed for a wick. These must have given a very feeble light, but even so, they evidently gave satisfaction, for their use continued for thousands of years; while the shape changed somewhat, and the decorations became more elaborate, their essential quality remained the same. That so many of them were placed in the tombs seems an indication of the shadowy type of existence they expected in the next world, for which the light was needed. In a later age there can be read from the inscriptions and from their literature what they thought about that world: that it was far more frequently thought of as underground and in darkness than in the light of the upper air. Hence these lamps were needed.

The vestibule entrance suggests some sort of ceremony at the grave, which was indicated in the earlier ages by piles of bones and cup-holes, as though a feast had been held. Here there are altars beside, with cup-holes, suggesting sacrifice and libation. The libation would go down into the earth; the smoke of the sacrifice would ascend to heaven. Perhaps they thought that the departed spirit went to some mysterious place below ground, to which their poured-out offering could penetrate; but that the gods dwelt in the upper air, and by the fragrance of their offering would be pleased to give help to those below, that they could attend to the dead, even though separated so far. Here again there is danger of reading into this the beliefs of a later age. It is certain, however, that the two types of worship continued together from the earliest times. The funeral feast also apparently remained a custom, as did also the burial of all things valued in this world for use in the next, and since there were many more arts and crafts at this time, the funeral deposits are correspondingly richer.

1. Seen at Jericho, 1955.

1. Egypt

One of the seats of earliest culture was Egypt. By the fourth millennium B.C. most of the swamps of the Nile had been cleared and settled. Historians usually give Asia and North Africa credit for the settling of Egypt and the growth of culture there, but something must be said for Egypt herself, as the development was not so great in the countries from which these early Egyptians are thought to have come. Some who have studied the archaeological history of that land think that even the god Osiris was originally a corn god from Syria which was amalgamated with the old god of the Necropolis, at best a shadowy figure.¹ Others trace the lineage of Osiris back in Egyptian history, an ancestor of the likewise mythological king Menes, and thus trace the religion of Egypt to ancestor worship, one of the earliest types of religion.² Both origins are possible, the god of the incoming settlers being joined to that of the people of the country. Many predynastic burial sites have been excavated in Egypt, which furnished Sir Flinders Petrie a large part of his dating materials for flints, stone, and pottery. This Chalcolithic Period was a most important one for that country, as it saw the change from a land inhabited by scattered barbaric tribes to a civilized nation with a culture that included art and luxury. The beginnings of all the things for which Egypt was later famous can be found in this early period, some of them in advanced form.

A growth in the caring for the dead can be followed steadily through the years, from the placing of the body in a shallow earth grave, to the great pyramids. The Step Pyramid at Sakkara, the first of the pyramids, stands just about on the line between the Chalcolithic and the Early Bronze Periods. The care for the body developed gradually, until the stage was reached of the mummy, embalmed and encased in elaborate coffins. The winds of Egypt quickly dried the bodies. For a time they were exposed to the sun for drying, and then wrapped in matting for burial. Gradually the more elaborate care was developed, at least for the royal family and the nobles. Tomb furnishings also increased with the more elaborate tombs.³

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1. Harry Reginald Holland Hall, "Egypt: Religion," Ency. Brit. (1946), VIII, 58.
 2. Bros, op. cit., I, 104.
 3. Walter Bryan Emory, "Egypt: Archaeology," Ency. Brit (1946), VIII, 51.

While others were learning the use of copper, the Egyptians still held to stone for many things. Arrowheads were made of flint on into the next era, for it must have seemed useless to waste the precious metal on things that might not be recovered. Babylonian influence can be seen in the brick buildings that begin very early in the period. The bricks used are quite different from the Babylonian type, but the method of using them indicates that they probably learned from the Babylonians. However, for their main beliefs and their treatment of the dead, each seems to have kept their own distinctive ideas.¹

2. Malta

Whether Malta influenced Egypt or Egypt Malta is a question. Malta gives most interesting views of the prehistoric ages. The Maltese sanctuaries are of a distinct type, generally with two elliptical rooms. The main entrance is in the center of one of the long sides, with a passage connecting the chambers directly in line with it. A shrine stands in a niche at the far side of the inner chamber. It is probable that these elliptical areas were roofed over originally. The shrines certainly were, as were also the apses, and their forms show contact with the earlier Neolithic cultures.

The shape is derived from the dolmen. Here the entire shrine is cut out of the solid stone and presents the appearance of a stone shelf carved in a recess. From all of which we may draw the conclusion that just as the dolmen marked the tomb of a hero who was worshiped at the place where it was erected, so the niches were places where the worshiper entered into fellowship with the departed spirit. . . .

At Hal-Tarxien the cover slabs around the walls are richly carved with a spiral pattern. May not this pattern indicate the winding way by which the soul must pass before it can enter into the innermost? Around and around in a circle it must move, making but a very little gain with each revolution, constantly repeating itself and yet constantly nearing the center, which is the perfection of fellowship with the hidden one and the holy.²

1. Hall, op. cit., p. 51.

2. Edward Arthur Wicher, "Malta" Art and Archaeology, 31(1930), 6.

This seems to be reading a much later thought into a very early form of decoration, but some time, somewhere, that idea originated, and there may have been the seed of it here in Malta. Single stone tables were found before the shrines, on which libations were poured and sacrificial banquets spread.

Of all the excavations in Malta, the one that strikes the imagination most vividly is the Hal-Saffiendi hypogeum, cut out of the living rock. There is an extensive series of rooms which are beautifully carved. This was meant for a temple probably, and later used for an ossuary. Here the prehistoric men buried their dead; over thirty-three thousand skeletons have been found in this place. Among the standing-stones is one near a wall, through which a small hole has been cut, possibly communicating with an oracle. The top of the pillar is hollow, shaped like a grave, which suggests the exposure of the dead. How the bodies were treated is not known, but it must have been done by burning, or exposure, or exhuming after a period of internment, for the bones are all bare and disjointed, and strangely separated. In one cubic meter of earth there were over one hundred knee-caps found! That portion of the structure which is above ground has been destroyed, although the plan can be recognized; but the underground chambers remain intact. Three stories were cut underground, though there may have been some caves there to start with. In one of the caves or underground chambers there is a deep pit, where it has been suggested that they may have kept sacred serpents. Beautiful pottery is found, all shattered, although there are no signs of any earthquake. The destruction must have been intentional. The pottery is black, highly polished, with lines of red ochre. Many of the bowls are decorated with the same spirals found in other shrines. Figures of horned bulls are frequent also, and one large black plate shows cut into its surface all around the edge and painted in red, a group of buffaloes with large horns and long tails. Malta evidently is the seat of one of the early cultures, and it could be that from here as a center the influence went out to Egypt, and to Greece, and to all the other countries of the Mediterranean Shore.¹

1. William Arthur Griffiths, "Malta: The Halting Place of Nations," Nat.Geog. Mag., 37(1920), 456 ff.

3. Arabia

Bare and bleak as Arabia seems today, with its people apparently a backward race, that land makes claim to being the cradle of civilization, and in particular the province of Hasa, bordering the Persian Gulf, where American engineers have set up a great refinery for the rich oil fields. There were many thousand round burial mounds found there, which have been scientifically excavated. Pliny and Strabo had written fascinating tales of this country, but it is now taken over by desert sands. At Dahran, an "avenue" of tombs has been found, in two parallel lines sixty feet long, which resembles a "cemetery city or settlement of gigantic prairie-dogs." The entrances face southwest at an odd angle which proved to be oriented toward the evening star, and suggested that they worshiped the goddess Venus, by whatever name she was called in their religion. Flint scrapers and points, and cores of the Stone Age were found, and great numbers of pearls. Evidently pearl fishing was as great an industry in Chalcolithic times as it was in the days of Pliny and Strabo, when the finest pearls were reported to have come from that region. Out of Arabia went wave after wave of emigrants, peopling the land of Palestine, and going west into Africa and east into Mesopotamia.¹

4. Mesopotamia

The "Land of the Two Rivers" destined to make such a large impress on the history of the whole world, had its beginning in the far past. Much of the archaeological research there has centered around the cultures of a later era, but investigation of the mound at Mosul has disclosed very early life. It rises seventy-five feet above the plain, two thirds of which date from prehistoric times. The place is known by the name of "Tepe Gawra," which means "Great Mound." Excavation laid bare twenty-six occupation levels, only the top six of which were within the historic age. The unfolding picture yielded a pattern of steady advance in pottery, architecture, religion, society, work and play. It is a question that cannot be definitely answered

1. Peter Bruce Cornwall, "In Search of Arabia's Past," Nat. Geog. Mag., 93 (1948), 493 ff.

why people continued to build on top of the old sites which had to be leveled and filled in, when all the plain lay before them. One reason, of course, was that the original site had been chosen for its water supply. But there are also other considerations suggested:

The main reason for continuing on the old site was . . . the desire to follow, wherever possible, the outlines of the old buildings, particularly the temples, in order to earn the protection of the gods and spirits the previous town had propitiated. Here is the tradition at work from the ground, so to speak. As occupation followed upon occupation the site grew not only in height, but also in prestige and defensibility. With this growth there came also a proportionate rise in the influence of tradition upon each successive occupant. . . .

The dominant theme of this Copper-Stone age was religion. The principal buildings were temples. Because venerated religious centers found eager builders after each destruction, whatever the cause, the mound witnessed many successive occupations, layer upon layer.¹

The most outstanding group here is that of three temples belonging to the thirteenth level, with the central shrine decorated with white plaster. At the time of its discovery it was the oldest example of monumental architecture in the world, and it still remains a witness to the great strides which the prehistoric men had made since their emergence from obscurity. Attention was given to the graves as well as to the temples. Here, as elsewhere, the dead were buried surrounded by their earthly treasures. Here, then, is another place where the dating of pottery can be specific. Their pottery is often decorated with naturalistic designs of plants, birds, animals, and even landscapes. The painter ground his colors on stone palettes. The stonecutter did fine work, his masterpieces being beautiful obsidian bowls, painstakingly cut from the translucent volcanic glass. Here some of the earliest musical instruments are found. In one grave a young boy was buried with his playing-pipe in his right hand.²

1. E. A. Speiser, "Ancient Mesopotamia: A Light that Did Not Fail," Nat. Geog. Mag., 99(1951), 42.

2. H. W. Herget, "Ancient Mesopotamia" (Paintings with Explanations), Nat. Geog. Mag., 99(1951), 61,63.:

5. India, China, Japan

Perhaps it was from Mesopotamia that the first culture spread to India. Long before the Aryan invasion which gave India its present life, there were temples and shrines, the ruins of which can be seen today. Skeletal remains show Australoid, Mongolian, and Mesopotamian features. Excavations in south India have disclosed a Chalcolithic culture which lasted for several thousand years and was not displaced until the Aryan invasion.¹ This is distinguished by stone and copper figurines, human and animal, some in naturalistic form and some highly stylized. Their plastic art seems to represent a preliminary stage of Hindu art. There are many figures of the bull which is the sacred animal of the Hindu religion.

The most primitive clay figures, evidently belonging to an early stratum, represent a woman wearing a large head-dress and a superabundance of jewelry. This type has been tentatively interpreted as a goddess of motherhood and fertility, but as deities of this character are found almost everywhere in agricultural civilizations, it is not necessarily the prototype of the Hindu goddess. . . . Still, the ornaments and the head-dress of those crude figures definitely appear, naturally in more finely elaborate forms, on stone and bronze statues of deities, both Brahmanic and Buddhist, in later centuries.²

Excavations in China have been carried out only sporadically, though some systematic work has been done in North China and Manchuria by Swedish geologists. Stone three-legged urns have been found that are prototypes of sacrificial bronze vessels of a later age.³

In Japan a great variety of vases, urns, and crude figurines have been unearthed, which are very primitive and bear a close resemblance to the Neolithic statuettes of Europe, and seem to have no connection with any later development. Japan claims great prehistoric antiquity, but scientific groups have not investigated thoroughly there.⁴

1. Sir Mortimer Wheeler, Archaeology from the Earth (Baltimore: Penguin Books, Inc., 1956), p. 142 f.

2. Adam, op. cit., p. 120.

3. Ibid., p. 110.

4. Ibid., p. 111.

6. The Pacific Islands

At one time there may have been a land bridge between Asia or Australia and South America, or possibly more islands than at present appear, which could have been "stepping-stones" between the continents. The islands that remain in the Pacific Ocean show traces of a megalithic culture. Ruins of a mysterious city known as Nanmatel stand on Ngatik Island, and these have been traced to the Stone Age. There is a similar ancient ruin on Ponape, seventy-five miles farther east, and a slightly different ruin on Kusaic. According to their myths, these walls of massive stone were built by the gods. On Ponape the natives have a story that two brothers, Oleosiba and Oleosoba, came from a distant land and ruled over the people jointly. They prayed to the gods for a city, and it was sent down to them from the sky. The gods who sent it watched over it and punished all who would harm it. Many years later it was attacked, but the gods thundered every time the enemy approached the city. Although the enemy conquered the island, they could not enter the city, but left it unoccupied to ruin and decay. A burial temple there gives witness to their care for the dead.¹

Midway between the coast of Chile and the Asian archipelago is Easter Island, where the remnants of an ancient megalithic culture are found. There are people living on the island, but they have no memories of their ancient past. The island abounds in strange, huge figures, cut from compressed volcanic ash, which is comparatively soft and easily worked. They represent the upper half of the body, with large heads and long ears, and they vary from three to sixty feet in height. They are surmounted by large hats cut from a red stone of a different quality, some as high as six feet, and eight feet in diameter. These stand on platforms guarding the dead, who were exposed there until their bones were bleached; they were then placed in tombs which were underneath. There were two hundred sixty of these platforms near the coast—it is not possible to go more than a few hundred yards without coming upon one of these abodes of the dead. They are about three hundred feet long

1. Junius B. Wood, "Yap and Other Islands under Japanese Mandate," Nat. Geog. Mag., 40(1921), 6.

and fifteen feet high. They are perpendicular on the seaward side, but on the land side they are buttressed. The statues stand in a single line facing the land, though most of them have fallen on their faces. On the slope of the volcanic mountain of which the island is formed are many such images in various stages of completion, left just as they were when something happened--perhaps a volcanic eruption--to stop the work. Stone tools are lying beside them just as they were left, mostly stone axes.¹ The living people on the island have not advanced far beyond the ancient Stone Age culture, having no metal. But they have evolved a pictographic writing made up of stylized figures of men, birds, animals, and fish. This is engraved on stone tablets vertically, in boustrophedon style, the tablets having to be turned upside down at the end of each line in order to make the next line readable. Nothing is left of the ancient people but these burials, which witness to their care for the dead.²

7. America

The prehistoric ages in America present a problem for which no solution has yet been found. Some think that all of the Indians of America came over a land bridge from northern Asia, of which the "stepping stones" of the Aleutian Islands are all that is left. They think that the Aleuts are the remnants of those people who stayed behind while the rest journeyed south. The Eskimos are thought to have come by the same route some time later. There is a distinct difference between the Aleut and the Eskimo; one thing most noticeable is the regard for the dead. The Eskimo fears them, regarding them as malicious. On the other hand, the Aleut regards them with affection, and carefully preserves the bodies. Many mummies have been found in prehistoric village sites on the islands.³

While some of the Indians may have made the long trek down from Asia over the Islands of the Bering Strait and down the western coast of America,

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1. Herman Justus Brounholtz, "Easter Island," Ency. Brit. (1946), VII, 860, 861.
 2. Mrs. Scoresby Routledge, "The Mystery of Easter Island," Nat. Geog. Mag., 40(1921), 640 ff.
 3. Isabel Wylie Hutchison, "The Riddle of the Aleutians," Nat. Geog. Mag., 32(1942), 768 ff.

this does not seem to account for the high degree of culture to be found in Central and South America, nor for the Indian tribes in the central part of the United States. Discoveries of skeletal remains in dinosaur sections of North America, and with the sabre-tooth tiger in Florida, and recent finds in Alabama suggest an indigenous development. Many pyramids and mounds were built in the central part of the United States by the long-past ancestors of the American Indians. St. Louis was once known as "Mound City" because of them, but the growth of the city has destroyed all but one of those mounds. When the largest one was excavated, it was found to cover a burial chamber with at least twenty bodies. The largest mound in the country is at Great Cahokia. It has been calculated that with the primitive equipment they had, it would have taken a thousand Indians at least five years to construct it. Ohio and Virginia are celebrated for many mounds. Thomas Jefferson in 1780 excavated one containing more than a thousand secondary burials. In the Great Lakes area are mounds of an extraordinary type. One is more than a thousand feet long and shaped like a coiled serpent. This can be recognized only from an airplane, and it seems incredible that the Indians could have known what they were doing when they built it! Its significance is unknown.¹

While the long trek down the western coast hardly seems to account for the Indian civilization in the southwest, and certainly not in Central and South America, any hypothetical chain of islands from Asia to South America seems to offer no adequate solution either, for the culture found from Mexico to Peru is so much farther advanced than any so far discovered on any island or on the eastern part of the Asian continent. The discovery of Paleolithic and Neolithic remains on both the American continents suggests the possibility of an entirely different people when "the earth brought forth." In several of the Central and South American sites there are vestiges of a very ancient but highly civilized people. Yet there are affinities with cultures of the Eastern Hemisphere. There might be some connection somewhere, as yet unfound, or this may be a normal human development, given the right conditions.

1. Neil Merton Judd, "Pyramids' of the New World," Nat. Geog. Mag., 93(1948), 105 ff.

High up in the mountains of Bolivia are found the ruins of what is perhaps the oldest city of the "new world," near Tiahuanacu on Lake Titicaca. Two distinct civilizations can be recognized there, the second reconstructing the ruins of the first. Carvings show a sun god, with rays about his head, some of them terminating in the heads of jaguars. The condor is a symbol frequently used also. Copper implements are found here, for the Bolivian hills contain much copper. In other parts of the Andes, where gold abounds, that metal is found in earliest use.¹

Accident due to flood in Peru during excavation into Inca culture led to the discovery of seven different people preceding the Incas: each of these had distinctive pottery in geologic strata, which may help in dating other American ruins as well. In the Salinar culture, which probably corresponds with the Chalcolithic times, there is evidence of human sacrifice. The decorations were very crude in this early time.² The Chimu, immediately preceding the Incas, built a huge wall "like some prehistoric snake" with forts at irregular intervals.³

In the San Augustan region of Colombia there have been unearthed relics of one of the oldest aboriginal cultures in the Americas. Temples were found in the form of dolmens, and more than a hundred statues of extraordinary size with human-like features, but with gigantic teeth, while the human statuettes were toothless. One huge statue, apparently a goddess, with large round eyes and long protruding teeth, holds a baby with a moon-shaped headdress. An altar was found in the shape of an alligator of gigantic size, with a hollow on its back for sacrifice, and a drain leading from there to its mouth, which may have been for the blood. Many tombs have been excavated, with much pottery decorated with straight lines and squared figures. These ancient artists would have been "at home in a cubist art display."⁴

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1. Stewart E. McMillan, "The Heart of Aymara Land," Nat. Geog. Mag. 51(1927) 213.
 2. William Duncan Strong, "Finding the Tomb of a Warrior God," Nat. Geog. Mag. 91(1947), 464.
 3. Robert Shippee, "Air Adventures in Peru," Nat. Geog. Mag., 63(1933), 83.
 4. Hermann von Waldi-Waldegg, "Stone Idols of the Andes Reveal a Vanished People," Nat. Geog. Mag., 77(1940), 626 ff.

Deep in the jungles of Panama, buried under ruins apparently caused by an earthquake, an aboriginal temple was found with a green sandstone floor. Shaft tombs thirty feet deep gave a great amount of stone axes and grinders, large pots that once held food and drink for the dead man's spirits, and manatee bones with alligator designs. There were flint arrowheads, and pottery whistles in shapes of birds and animals.¹

A strange discovery in the prehistoric levels of the jungle depths of Guatemala was a group of pottery vessels, each containing the neatly-sawed-off face of a human skull. One mound held the burial of a single individual, who was evidently a person of prominence. His body was flexed and laid on its side in the exact center of the mound, but decapitated, with the skull filled with red paint and placed face down in a large marine shell, the jaw detached and placed beside the skull. Nothing of this kind has been found elsewhere, though red paint was used in European burials of an earlier day. There was a band of fifty-six large shell beads around the head. A polished turtle shell with seven small shells inside for a sort of rattle was placed beside him. An avenue of gigantic monoliths led to the temple which was in complete ruin, but one stone had a carved face with a feather headdress.²

The Mixtecs and Zapotecs preceded the Aztecs in Mexico, but what is known of them consists largely of legend. At Monte Albán are ruins credited to them consisting of four large platforms with a mound or pyramid in the center, with a tomb underneath. There are three stairways, one above another. Here are very strange relief sculptures of human beings, all of whom have some bodily deformity. It is possible that this was a shrine to which the sick came for cures. If so, it is the first instance of the kind known.³ At Mitla, Uxmal, Palenque and Cholula there are monuments left by a forgotten civilization. The pyramid at Cholula has a larger base than Cheops in Egypt. Symbols found there are strangely like those of ancient Egypt also. A "Path of the Dead"

1. Matthew W. Stirling, "Exploring Ancient Panama by Helicopter," Nat. Geog. Mag., 97(1950), 227-229.

2. W.F.Sands, "Mysterious Temples of the Jungle," Nat.Geog.Mag., 23(1913), 325.

3. Alfonso Case, "Monte Albán, Richest Archaeological Find in America," Nat. Geog. Mag., 62(1932), 486 ff.

with carvings of serpents on the pillars, led to the pyramid. The modern inhabitants know the builders only as "The Forgotten People."¹

D. World-Wide Kinship of Ideas

All around the world have been found signs of a slowly-developing civilization, with local differences, but with amazing similarity. These are too nearly simultaneous to have been generally the result of intercourse, although in some places there were migrations which can account for some of the development. But there seems to have been inherent in the human mind the constant reaching for something beyond, which made for growth in culture. While the sun, moon, and stars are constantly found as objects of worship, there is a strong tendency to worship animals, or strange combinations of the human-animal figures. Bulls and lions predominate in the East; alligators, frogs, monkeys, and even a duck-billed god, are found in the West. The snake seems to have been an object of worship everywhere, whether out of reverence or fear is not known; but considering the deadly poison of some of the serpents, it would seem more likely that they were feared and placated rather than truly worshiped. Everywhere the dead are given particular burial, although the methods differ greatly. Everywhere the implements used in life and the ornaments worn, are buried with the dead: whether to accompany them into the next world, or to get them out of the way lest there be some magic left in them, one cannot say.

There have been a few signs of pictographic writing found here and there, though none of them has as yet been deciphered. Meager as these are, they are the seeds dropped in fertile soil, which will bring in the new age. And with the development of that new skill, the historic stage opens.

1. Frederick Simpich, "North America's Oldest Metropolis," Nat. Geog. Mag. 58(1930), 81.

CHAPTER VI

THE EARLY BRONZE PERIOD 3,000—2,500 B.C.

A. Characterization of the Bronze Period

The Bronze Period is of such surpassing significance that its Early, Middle, and Late parts are treated in three different chapters. The Early Bronze period comprises only about five hundred years, but these years saw amazing changes in the development of culture. They are packed with progress.

1. Bronze, a Metal Alloy

The whole period takes its name from an alloy of copper and tin known as bronze. The preceding age was named for copper, which was found in the free state and easily worked. Since, however, it could be worked cold, it could be easily bent out of shape. It was more permanent than stone, which could be chipped, cracked, or broken. The people of Mesopotamia were experimenting early with alloys, for the first object of mixed metals at present known was found there: a fine adz head with a hole for the shaft, excavated in one of the early layers of Ur. This was made of gold, silver, copper, and tin. When they finally settled on tin and copper for bronze is not known, nor where the first such alloy was made. In southern Palestine bronze was in use early. The "tinstone" is found in the same sections of the country as copper. The tin might have been isolated first and added to the copper; or the "tinstone" could have been used with the copper in the refining process; or the tin and copper may have been put into the furnace at the same time. Many discoveries of value have been "stumbled upon" and it is possible that the two ores were put into the furnace together by mistake, with far-reaching results, which produced a material that changed the history of the world.

1. Harold John Edward Peake, "Archaeology: Bronze Age," Ency. Brit. (1946), II, 247.

2. The Development of Writing

The second advance which characterizes this period is the art of writing. In the preceding period a few pictographic symbols had been used. Sumerians in southern Mesopotamia had been using seal stamps on their jar handles to distinguish them, perhaps much in the same way that cattle are branded now. Some time around 3000 B.C. they made the discovery that these symbols could be impressed on clay tablets. Once that transition had been made the rest was a matter of time. When the scribes had progressed from the writing of names to the expression of ideas by words and sentences, history in the true sense had begun.¹ The Temple Court of Uruk, Biblical Erech, provided the earliest form of actual writing that has been found so far. When ancient Sumerian scribes of Mesopotamia wrote on wet clay tablets with a square-tipped reed stylus, they tilted the reed as they pressed it into the clay, with the result that every impression made was wedge-shaped. From this shape, this type of writing has been known as "cuneiform" from the Latin word "cuneus," meaning wedge.²

Writing developed along different lines in Egypt. The earliest writing there, as elsewhere, and as still exists among primitive people today, was picture drawing. Gradually the pictures became symbols, recognized as signs for certain words or ideas. About five thousand years ago in Egypt picture drawing evolved into character writing, somewhat along the lines of modern rebus puzzles.³ This system became known as "hieroglyphic" from the Greek words meaning "sacred carving," which indicates that the earliest writing of this type was carved into the stone of the Egyptian tombs. They also wrote these symbols with a brush using ink made from a vegetable gum, on strips of the reed known as "papyrus," from which we get our word "paper."

Studies now are on more solid ground. No longer is so much imagination needed to understand what people were thinking as they laid their dead away, or as they assembled in their temples to worship.

1. Herget, *op. cit.*, p. 66.

2. W. H. Nicholas, "The World's Words," *Nat. Geog. Mag.*, 84(1943), 699.

3. Nicholas, *ibid.*

B. Tomb Furnishings and Inscriptions

1. Egypt

The earlier Egyptian tombs were of the Mastaba type, simple structures of from one to three rooms with a flat roof. These continued to be used for many centuries. But this was not sufficient for the kings! The first pyramid was built during the early part of this age, the so-called "Step Pyramid" built under the direction of Pharaoh Djoser at Sakkara, about 2740 B.C. Sir Flinders Petrie explains this shape as a natural development from the earlier tombs, an attempt to make the old mastaba larger and grander. For this first pyramid one mastaba was piled on another in decreasing sizes until the top was reached. Whether they wanted to copy the mountains, or to build a pillar to heaven, or for what purpose, this started a new style. Imhotep, the architect in charge of the building was deified for his work, and his talents grew as he became a legendary figure. The Greeks later identified him with Aesculapius, their god of medicine.¹

The next type of Egyptian tomb was also a step pyramid, in which the steps were filled in to make the surface smooth, built at Medum. The next pyramid, and the last of this Early Bronze Period, was built for Pharaoh Snefru at Dahshar, between 2600 and 2500 B.C., known as the "bent pyramid." The name of Snefru has been found on some of the stone blocks. The tomb chambers were made of wood, heavy cedar logs probably from the famous "cedars of Lebanon." The wood is still firm after all these years. The architect started to build at too steep an angle, such that the center could not support the weight, so at the central point he changed the angle, giving the pyramid a bent appearance. There were various intricate passageways and chambers in the pyramids, but the tomb itself was usually cut in the rock underneath. There are often a number of stones engraved with the "cartouche"—the name in a box or frame—of the Pharaoh for whom the pyramid was built.³

1. Ceram, op. cit., pp. 142, 143.

2. Jefferson Caffrey, "Fresh Treasures from Egypt's Sands," Nat. Geog. Mag. 108(1955), 635.

3. Sir William Matthew Flinders Petrie, "Pyramids," Ency. Brit. (1946), XVIII, 792.

The Egyptians regularly placed a funerary temple on the east side of the tomb, and the pyramids were no exception. In 1951 excavations on the east side of the Step Pyramid brought to light the temple, long buried under the sands. Here the altars were standing in the shrine, with the charcoal still in them. There were inscriptions and reliefs, statues and steles, stone vases and painted walls. The statue of Snefru was in full color, with the crown on his head. The pictures painted on the temple walls, and the inscriptions, showed funeral ceremonies that were still in use as late as the Roman times. The false door, which represented the exit of the deceased from this world, was always on the west wall of the temple, where the king, deified after his death, was worshiped. The temple was entered from the east, and the people faced west, looking toward the tomb or pyramid. The pyramid was never a family tomb, in spite of its size. It was for the king alone. Members of the family often had their own lesser pyramids nearby.¹

These Early Bronze Tombs were only for the kings and high counselors, and occasionally for the family of the king. What happened to the common people of this early time is unknown—except for the few unhappily honored ones who were buried with the king to be his servants in the next world. Corpses of alligators and cats and other sacred animals have been found, as carefully-mummified as the bodies of the kings, but none of the common man. Another millennium had to pass before he attained to the dignity of such burial as would last to the present day.² That did not necessarily mean that there was no immortality for him. His home on earth was a poor rude shelter in contrast to the great palaces of the king and nobles, so probably they felt that a very simple burial would care for his needs beyond the grave.

From the elaborate Egyptian burials much can be learned of their belief in immortality, of the gods they worshiped, of the ceremonies connected with their religious observances, and even of their daily life. One thing is very noticeable: their tombs were finer than their houses, even than the Pharaoh's

1. Petrie, op. cit., p. 793.

2. James Henry Breasted, Development of Religion and Thought in Ancient Egypt (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1912), p. 259.

palace. They evidently felt, as many seem to have felt in other lands on down to later eras, that as life after death is long, the house of the spirit must also be correspondingly lasting. No doubt they believed that this future life was similar to that on earth, judging by their elaborate burial deposits.

There is a recognizable beginning of spiritual ideas here. The Egyptians thought that man was made up of three parts or entities: first was the body, which remained in the tomb; the second was the ba, a spirit that went down to the under world and found a place among the shades; the third was the ka, for which there is no English synonym—perhaps "ghost" would come nearest. The ka lingered in the tomb near the body, taking shelter in the statue placed by the tomb's door, sometimes represented by a small replica of the larger figure. This was a sort of connection between the dead body and the former life. This exceedingly elaborate preparation for a life after death shows an optimistic outlook, with the after-world a pleasant abode for at least some of the people.¹ On many monuments this confession is engraved:

I believe in a last accounting for men.
I believe that one thing is needful.
I believe in a last judgment.
I believe in the eternal fate of the soul.²

The teleological principle was so strongly emphasized in the Egyptian wall paintings that one recognizes the whole of Egyptian life as a "journey toward death," in spite of which their life seems to have been a happy one.³

There was a hereafter, a great beyond, a region apart from ordinary earth and sky. This beyond was peopled with the dead, who were permitted to inhabit the spirit realms provided . . . they were justified in the Last Judgment before the Divine Judge, knew the secret formulas, and could bring with them appurtenances proper to their earthly life. The post-mortem paraphernalia included absolutely everything used by the deceased during his daily life.⁴

1. Harris, The Hebrew Heritage, pp. 95, 96.

2. Gustav-Adolf Gecat, They Built for Eternity, trans., Roland H. Bainton, (Nashville: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1953), p. 45.

3. Ceram, op. cit., p. 82.

4. Ibid., p. 143.

Many of the ornaments found in the tombs even at this early time were of turquoise, which is not native to Egypt. Sir Flinders Petrie, excavating on the Sinai Peninsula in 1905, found the turquoise mines. They had been worked for successive generations, but a large carving of the royal hawk of Pharaoh Snefru showed that they were in existence at least as early as his reign. The Egyptian miners had built a large temple there, with a richly-carved stele, and nearby, cubicles for the workmen. Why the site was left to the desert sands is unknown.¹

2. Crete

The funeral rites at Crete were so similar to those of Egypt that there must have been a definite connection. This can be recognized also through their pottery and paintings. However, there was one significant difference: while the tombs of Egypt were much more magnificent than the dwellings, the Minoan palaces were justly famed for their splendor, but their tombs were very simple, often just caves in the hillsides. However, Crete had mountains where caves were native. It was a long distance to the hills of Egypt, and these did not contain many caves. The tomb chambers had to be cut out of the solid rock. If they wanted tombs closer at hand, they had to build them; and if they wanted their tombs in the hills, they had to construct those hills--hence the pyramids.²

3. Mesopotamia

The rival of Egypt as the seat of early culture was the "Land of the Two Rivers," or Mesopotamia. Here the earliest burials were in the earth. A very large cemetery has been excavated at Ur in which were found cylinders with pictographic writing. If Sir Leonard Woolley's dating is correct, these belong to the earlier, Chalcolithic Period, 3500-3200 B.C., or even earlier.³ Later chronology has placed them in the Early Bronze time. The earliest,

1. Henry Field, "Sinai Sheds Light on the Bible," Nat. Geog. Mag., 94(1948), 815.

2. Childe, The Dawn of Civilization, p. 314.

3. Sir Leonard Woolley, Spadework in Archaeology (New York: Philosophical Library, 1953), p. 86.

known as Phase A, contained 389 tombs; Phase B had 271, all showing signs of partial cremation; there were 15 tombs of the Ur II period, and 408 of the time of Sargon of Agade, about 2600 B.C.; and there were 751 that could not be definitely dated. In the earlier tombs the bodies were placed in plain earth or on a couch of stones; in the later ones they were rolled in straw mats. They were characterized by signs of sacrificial funeral rites, and had painted pottery buried with them. Something new for graves of this era were terra cotta figurines, usually of a nude woman with a child either on her shoulder or in her arms. The head, when not broken off, was in profile.¹

One of the finest tombs of Ur was that of Queen Shub-ad; her name was found on a lapis-lazuli seal. This tomb was intact. Evidently sacrificed and buried with her were: five soldiers; ten ladies, of which one was a harpist; two court attendants, one on each side of her; and a chariot drawn by two donkeys. There were nearly three hundred vessels of gold, silver, pottery, and stone, and much jewelry. The Queen may have been a sacrifice to the Moon God, and "this her wedding journey to meet him in the other world."²

The tomb of A-kalam-dug of Ur had seventy-four attendants, eight of whom were women. Four men carried lyres ornamented with golden bulls' heads.

Did all these people . . . go down of their own free will into the sepulchers of their lords and masters, or were they compelled to accompany them into the life beyond the grave? Or is this perhaps the grim evidence of pitiless sacrifices, having regard to the quality and number of victims, in connection with a fertility-cult, the fecundity of the land being secured at the cost of this mass immolation? - Numerous hypotheses have been put forward to account for these hecatombs, and for the accumulation of so many things around a single corpse. Recently the German orientalist Anton Moortgat has suggested that these burials and the supposed violation of certain tombs, are connected with beliefs according to which Tammuz, the god who dies and is resurrected, was one of the principal deities of the Mesopotamian pantheon.³

1. André Parrot, "La Protohistoire Mesopotamienne," Archaeologie Mesopotamienne, (Paris: 1946), p. 120.

2. Gedat, op. cit., p. 16.

3. Parrot, Discovering Buried Worlds, p. 75.

In some of these Babylonian graves, by each of the attendant skeletons was found a cup. It has been suggested that during the burial rites these ranged themselves in their appointed places, then drank the poisoned cup, in order to accompany their master or mistress on the journey. If so, this was a more merciful method of human sacrifice than was used elsewhere.¹

4. Phoenicia

The little country of Phoenicia was beginning to come into prominence at this period, having close contact with Egypt. Excavations conducted by French archaeologists in 1938 unearthed a temple dating back to 2500 B.C. Earlier graves had been found on the site, but this was the first temple discovered. Philo of Byblos, who wrote the history of his country, reported that the god worshiped there was Cronos, and a stele shows him seated before the Well of Byblos, the first settlement in Phoenicia. An alabaster placque in fragments has some hieroglyphic signs that connect this with the second or third Dynasty of Egypt, and a nearby broken cylinder seal depicts Mesopotamian deities. So Byblos apparently had connections in both directions.

5. The Hittites

Farther north the Hittite kingdom was coming into power. The earliest traces connect the Hittites with the first two dynasties of Ur. Their early dynastic levels show many intra-mural burials, with metal and ceramic tomb gifts. There is a question whether this may be like the more ancient burials at the threshold or under the hearth, or whether they may be foundation ones, of which more is heard in a later age. There is no historical connection with either Egypt or Babylonia until the next period.³ Modern research has proved that their language belongs in the Indo-European group, so they were perhaps a part of that great migration in prehistoric times.⁴

1. Parrot, "La Protohistoire Mesopotamienne," p. 121.

2. Maurice Dunard, "La Sixieme Campagne des Fouilles de Byblos," Syria, 9(1928), 173 ff.

3. Woolley, op. cit., p. 65.

4. Frederick Hrozny, "Hittites," Ency. Brit. (1946), XI, 600.

6. The Amorites

During this era the chief occupants of Palestine were the Amorites. They used the caves, which are found in such numbers throughout the country, for burial and usually placed the dead in contracted position in large pottery jars, burying beautifully-decorated pottery with them. Funerary offerings included food and drink in pottery vessels. Cooked mutton and grain in those jars have been found in recognizable condition. As their neighbors around them, they evidently believed in life after death, a material existence that required food, used the familiar utensils of their life on earth, and also enjoyed the ornamentation of jewelry and the artistry of decorated jars.

7. The Canaanites

A cave burial near Khudleirah in the plane of Sharon yielded a number of painted caskets of clay shaped like the Canaanite houses of that time. They were intended to receive the bones of the deceased after the flesh had been decayed, either by exposure or by fire. This was evidently in a damp or marshy section of the country—unusual in any part of Palestine at the present time. The pottery houses stand on four feet, and since the rest so closely resembles the stone huts of the time, it probably means that the homes of the people had to be raised off the ground. The important thing, however, is that the burial resting place was made to resemble the earthly home.²

8. Jericho

In Jericho most of the Early Bronze tombs are "shaft" tombs, giving no indication of their existence above ground. Whether this was due to the sands of the desert blowing over them and obliterating any markers, or whether there was a desire for concealment, it is impossible to determine. When Miss Diana Kirkbride, who was in charge of the tomb excavations there, was asked how she knew where to dig, she said that the ground seemed a little softer over the

1. Duncan, Digging up Biblical History, I, 128.

2. Elihu Grant, "Beth Shemesh," Annual of American Schools of Oriental Research, IX(1927-1928), 176.

grave, and that she just "had a feeling" that a tomb might be found under a certain spot—and she was usually correct. At the bottom of the shaft, some six or eight feet deep, there would be an entrance into a tomb of the Early Bronze Period. These tombs are quite varied: sometimes small with a single burial; sometimes a little larger, and apparently a family burial; sometimes large and roughly circular, with multiple burials. One, listed in Jericho Catalog as K 1, 1954, was large and roughly circular with sides sloping toward the top, and giving evidence of once having been roofed. A central stump of rock was probably a pillar to reinforce the roof, fallen down when the roof collapsed, by reason of earthquake perhaps. In spite of the debris from the roof, the form of burial was clear. Two large stones near the center were lifted, showing a lower cell beneath, where the main burials were placed. Here were many skulls ranged along the wall of the tomb, and a collection of other bones in miscellaneous array in the center. In the upper cave were a few niches containing separate burials, one of them an infant. There were beads, all loose, but from their position, evidently originally necklaces and bracelets; two bronze rings; pottery bowls; and bone cult objects.¹

On the other hand, Tomb K2, 1954, had articulated burial in Section I, the skeleton laid out full length. This tomb was in four layers, marked as sections on the chart of the Jericho Excavation. In Section II there was but one skeleton, and that in a flexed position. In the third layer there were again full-length articulated burials; while in Section IV skulls and bones were placed as in Tomb K 1. Section II had an unusual arrangement: it was floored with stones, having one or two flat stones above to make a platform. On top of this was a semi-circle of large stones, on the outer side of which was a large cluster of pots and bowls. Enclosed in the semi-circle and outlined by a "box" of smaller stones, was the one flexed burial.²

Tomb D 12, 1954, at Jericho, was in a lower section of the terrain, its shaft opening into a wadi bed, and its floor sloping. Here were found eight skulls and a great amount of pottery. Pottery was found in all the tombs,

1. Tomb Catalog of the Jericho Excavation, 1954; Copy in Jordan Museum.

2. Ibid.

but this one yielded a richer accumulation than most: 48 bowls, 242 juglets, 35 jars, 15 jugs, 22 lamps, 1 strainer, 4 cups, 1 double jar, 2 double bowls, 1 pot; then a group of miniatures: 52 juglets, 1 jar, 1 cup; and some other miscellaneous objects: 1 donkey figurine, 1 bull's head, 2 rings, 25 bone cult objects of the "flute" type, 3 pendants, 2 bored stones, 2 carved bones, 10 sets of small beads, and one delicately-carved large bead.¹

The principal thing that these Jericho tomb excavations seem to show is that there was a great variety in the method of burial. There was also very evident expectation of continued life, and no matter how the bodies were treated, all were given vessels for use in the strange world to which they were going, and beads for their adornment. Often also there were cult objects for some type of worship, or as protection for the journey perhaps.

9. Europe

Europe had not really reached the Bronze Age at this time, for the metal alloy method was late traveling in that direction. There seems to have been little change in the attitude toward the dead. If the implications of their burial customs of the earlier era have been correctly read, it is safe to make the same interpretation for this one. The most significant change is that the graves now contain a few inscriptions, though writing is not in use yet sufficiently to convey much information. There are more varieties of jewelry, pottery has advanced, and decorations are more elaborate. Civilization has been going forward. But religion is perhaps the most conservative of all man's beliefs and attitudes. Reverence for the dead still amounts almost to ancestor worship in most places.² Need for burial is felt everywhere, and in Greece there was the belief that a poor spirit had to roam the earth seeking shelter until it was given proper burial.³ Later this was a general belief, and it may have been widely followed this early. The care with which the dead are buried everywhere may give some basis for that interpretation.

1. Jericho Tomb Catalog, *op. cit.*

2. Bendann, Death Customs, pp. 45, 46.

3. G. Sergei, "Death and the Disposal of the Dead," Ency. Rel. & Eth., VI, 473.

Each period seems to set the stage for the next. This time it is the development of writing that leads to the better understanding of conditions and beliefs. In this Early Bronze Period there was the beginning of its use in inscriptions. The next age saw its further development into literary use, which made the change from legend and myth to history. The Middle Bronze Age has definite historical ground, with more adequate references for the interpretation of the archaeological discoveries.

CHAPTER VII

THE MIDDLE BRONZE PERIOD 2,500—1,800 B.C.

A. The World of the Middle Bronze Period

The rapid development of writing in the Middle Bronze Period made many more documents available for study. These give a clearer understanding of the ideas and ideals of people in all parts of the world. In fact, it is said by eminent scholars that we have "an embarrassing wealth of comparative material."¹

There is difficulty regarding dates for this period. Great eras do not follow the calendar so much as the cultural development of the great political movements of the various nations. The above dates relate specifically to Egypt, for the earlier date ushers in the building of the great pyramids, the writing of the Book of the Dead, and other texts, and the growth of national power after a period when feudal lords held sway. Egyptian prestige went steadily forward and their conquests in Palestine and as far north as the Hittite Kingdom extended the borders. The overthrow of the government by the Hyksos invaders marks the end of the era.

The delineation of the period is not so clear in the East. The conquest of Sargon of Agade, or Akkad, brought in the new age, which lasted with various fluctuations of power, through the reign of the justly-famous Hammurabi of Babylon. But every new discovery in that part of the country brings in a new alignment of dates; the 1942 dating of Dr. Albright extends the period about one hundred fifty years nearer our own time. But a plus or minus of from one to two hundred years is considered fairly close for those ancient days, all dates being approximate.² The dates are close enough to make it possible for a comparison between the Egyptian civilization and that of the "Land of the Two Rivers." There was some correspondence between the two.

1. James B. Pritchard, Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament (Princeton University Press, 1950), introduction.

2. Albright, Bulletin No. 88(1942), A.S.O.R., his third dating revision.

B. Documents Available for Study

1. Egypt

Egypt lays claim to having produced the oldest books in the world, the Ptah-Hotep and the Ka'Gemni, both being classed as "Wisdom Literature," books of instruction concerning the Egyptian ideal of life.¹ Shortly after this, came the Book of the Dead, and antedating all of them, many of the Pyramid Texts and the Coffin Texts, found in all the tombs. These texts continued to be used for more than a thousand years. Dr. Albright says that the Egyptians were the most conservative of all the people of their time:

Like newly-hatched chicks they carried their egg-shells about on their backs. They preserved outward customs and beliefs long after they were incongruous in their new setting.²

Thus there are in these ancient texts a hierarchy of gods and goddesses, some stemming from elaborate myths relating to cosmic deities, and others that seem to have a misty historical background, all probably dating back to a long-past period before the people settled in the Nile valley, though the organization and elaboration belong to a later age.³ From the earliest times known, Osiris was worshiped as Judge of the Underworld, though his origin is shrouded in mystery; and that of the other gods is more uncertain. It is not possible to construct a table of the gods of Egypt from their beginning, any more than it is possible to give a clear outline of the early history of the nation. But by the opening of this period, the main gods were reverently worshiped.⁴ It is not surprising that the Egyptians attempted to show the gods as different from men, but why they gave them animal form is beyond comprehension. Animals are below men in intelligence and ability, therefore far beneath any deity. Yet such ideas abounded everywhere—an attempt to visualize the Power of the universe as something Other than mankind, apparently.

1. Brian Brown, The Wisdom of the Egyptians (New York: Brentano's, 1923), p.93.

2. W. F. Albright, From Stone Age to Christianity (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1946), p. 131.

3. Moore, The Birth and Growth of Religion, p. 48.

4. Harry Reginald Holland Hall, "Egypt: Religion," Ency.Brit. (1946), VIII, 58.

Not until late in Egyptian history were the likenesses of the gods given human form. In the old religious consciousness of the land the gods were incarnated in the form of emblems, plants, and animals. The goddess Hathor was a cow; the god Nefertem a lotus flower; the goddess Neith was honored in the form of a shield on which two crossed arrows were nailed. Mostly, however, the Egyptian deities were represented in animal form. The god Khun was a ram; Horus, a falcon; Thoth, an ibis; Sebak, a crocodile; the goddess Nt, at Bubaste, a cat; and the goddess Buto, a serpent.¹

It was not only the images of such gods that were worshiped, but the real animal itself was given divine honors. These animals were chosen because of certain markings which were thought to set them out as divine. Most famous of all these was the sacred bull of Memphis, named Apis, and considered to be the special servant of the god Ptah.

(This sacred bull) was housed in a temple and tended by priests. When he died he was embalmed and buried with great ceremony, whereupon a new bull with the same markings took his place. Cemeteries worthy of the gods and kings were built for the internment of these holy beasts. At Bubastis and Beni Hasan there was a graveyard for cats, at Ombos one for crocodiles, at Ashmunein one for ibises, at Elephantine one for rams.²

Such customs continued for more than a thousand years, on into a time when it would seem that they would surely have learned better. It was from a cemetery of divine animals that the discovery of papyri with valuable records of a much later day was found:

The diggers at Tebtunis were thoroughly disgusted when day after day crocodiles and nothing but crocodiles appeared. Finally one workman was so overcome with stupid anger at his disappointment in finding a baby crocodile in a tomb which he had hoped might contain a princess robed in jewels, that he flung the mummy of this crocodile upon a rock and broke it in pieces—and then the discovery was made! The crocodile was stuffed with papiri!

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1. Ceram, Gods, Graves, and Scholars, p. 120.
 2. Ibid., p. 131.
 3. Cobern, The New Archaeological Discoveries, pp. 39,40.

When Egypt was united and Memphis became the capital, the god worshiped there became the "high god" over all the pantheon. Ptah was said to have created all things in heaven and earth, and even all the other gods, not excepting the great god Atum, and his method is given:

The sight of the eyes, the hearing of the ears,
and the smelling of the nose, they report to the heart.
It is this which causes every completed concept to come forth.
And it is the tongue which announces what the heart thinks.
Thus all the gods were formed. . . .
Indeed, all the divine order really came into being
through what the heart thought, and what the tongue commanded.¹

An ancient Egyptian's title to eternal happiness was often asserted by associating him with various superhuman forces, including the greatest gods of the land, who secured for him immortality. Sometimes the deceased was introduced as Osiris himself, and sometimes as other gods. The following text was written on the inner wall of the pyramid of King Unis, of the Fifth Dynasty, at Sakkarah:

O Unis, thou hast not departed dead, thou hast
departed living!
For thou sittest upon the throne of Osiris,
With thy scepter in thy hand,
That thou mightest give command to the living. . . .
Thy arm is Atum. . . .
Thy face is Anubis. . . .
The regions of Horus serve thee,
And the regions of Seth serve thee.²

Pictures, carvings, and inscribed texts appear on temple walls, on the inner walls of the pyramids, and on the sides of the coffins. The above text was one of the favorites, for by changing the name of the King, it could be used over and over. At first used only for the kings, the texts were later placed in the tombs of the nobles as well.

The temples, pyramids, and other buildings were formally dedicated on their completion, and many of them have parts of the dedication ritual inscribed on the walls. This one is on the Pyramid of Mer-ne-Re, Sixth Dynasty:

1. Pritchard, op. cit., p. 5.

2. Ibid., p. 32.

O Atum, put thou thy arms about King Mer-ne-Re,
 about this construction work, about this pyramid,
 as the arms of a ka,
 for the ka of King Mer-ne-Re is in it,
 enduring for the course of eternity.¹

The Egyptian Book of the Dead is so long, and so filled with texts right in line with this study, that the pages can be turned at random to find more material than can be used. The Egyptian title is "Coming Forth by Day," or "The Manifestation of Day"--referring to the bright future ahead for one who follows along the way indicated. The name probably had a significance for the Egyptian which is incapable of being translated into modern language, since present-day thoughts are not their thoughts. One of the sub-titles is, "The Chapter of Making Perfect the Khu"--Khu referring to the spirit or shadow.²

The Chapter of Causing the Soul to be United
 to its Body in the Underworld

The Osiris Ani, triumphant, saith,

Hail, thou god Anniu . . . who dwellest in thy hall!
 Hail, great God! Grant thou that my soul may come unto
 me from wherever it may be, for thou shalt find the Eye
 of Horus standing by thee like unto those beings who are
 like unto Osiris, and who never lie down in death. Let
 not Osiris Ani, triumphant, lie down in death among those
 who lie down in Annu, the land wherein souls are joined
 unto their bodies even in thousands. Let me have the
 possession of my ba (soul) and of my khu (spirit) and let
 me triumph therewith in every place wheresoever it may be.

And behold, grant ye that the soul of Osiris Ani,
 triumphant, may come forth before the gods and that it may
 be triumphant along with you in the eastern part of the
 sky to follow unto the place where it was yesterday; and
 that it may have peace, peace in Amemhet. May it look
 upon its material body, may it rest upon its spiritual
 body; and may its body neither perish nor suffer corruption
 forever.

(These words are to be said over a soul of gold inlaid
 with precious stones and placed on the breast of Osiris.)³

1. Pritchard, op. cit., p. 5.

2. Brown, op. cit., p. 125.

3. Brown, ibid., p. 138, from Papyrus No. 10,470, Sheet 17, British Museum.

The Chapter of Making a Man to Possess His Memory
in the Underworld

The Chancellor-in-Chief, Nu, triumphant, the Overseer of the
Palace, the son of the Chief Chancellor, Amen Hotep, saith:

May my name be given to me in the Great House, and
may I remember my name in the House of Fire on the night of
counting the years and telling the number of the months.
I am with the Divine One, and I sit on the eastern side of
heaven. If any god whatsoever should advance unto me, let
me be able to proclaim his name forthwith.¹

Death had no terrors for at least some of the people, for those who
were faithful in their duties to the gods, and who lived honorably on earth.
Here is a dialog between a man and his soul, found on a papyrus of the
Twelfth Dynasty:

Death is ever before me, like the healing of a sick man,
or like a rise in life after a fall.
Death is ever before me like the smell of frankincense,
or like sitting under an awning on a day of cool breeze.
Death is ever before me like the scent of lotuses,
or like sitting on the bank of the Land of Intoxication.
Death is ever before me like the unveiling of the sky,
or as when a man attaineth to unexpected fortune.
Death is ever before me as a man desireth to see his house
when he has spent many years in pulling the oars.
.....

My soul said to me:

Desire then that thou mayest reach the grave,
that thy body may join the earth,
that I may hover over thee after thou art weary.
Let us make a dwelling together.²

Yet occasionally there is another side to the picture. In many of the tombs
of the Thirteenth Dynasty there are wall paintings of harpers playing before
the deceased, who speak of the joys of life rather than the glories of the
world beyond. "Enjoy life while it lasts, for all things pass away, and are
succeeded by others which perish in their turn."³

1. Brown, op. cit., p. 172: British Museum No. 10,477, Sheet 5.

2. Francis L. Griffith and Kate Bradbury Griffith, "Egyptian Literature,"
Library of the World's Best Literature, IX, 5319.

3. Griffith, ibid., IX, 5316.

Follow thy desire and thy happiness while thou art on earth;
 fret not thy heart till cometh to thee that day of lamentations.
 The Still-in-Heart heareth not their lamentations;
 the heart of a man in the pit taketh no part in mourning.
 With radiant face, make a good day,
 and rest not on it.
 Behold, it is not given to a man
 to carry his goods with him!
 Behold, there is none who hath gone,
 and cometh back hither again.¹

When a man stands before Osiris, the Judge of the Dead, it is necessary that he declare his innocence. This was frequently written on the walls of the tomb in brief form, a "Negative Confession":

I have not done injustice.
 I have not robbed.
 I have not coveted.
 I have not stolen.
 I have not slain men.
 I have not diminished the corn measure.
 I have not acted crookedly.
 I have not stolen the property of the gods.
 I have not spoken falsehood. . . .
 I have not slain a sacred animal. . . .
 My mouth hath not run on.
 I have not been a talebearer in business not mine own.
 I have not been impure.
 I have not made a disturbance. . . .
 My mouth hath not been hot.
 I have not been deaf to the words of truth. . . .
 I have not borne a grudge.
 I have not quarreled. . . .
 My voice has not been too voluble in my speech.
 I have not deceived nor done ill.
 I have not cursed the king. . . .
 My voice is not loud.
 I have not cursed God. . . .
 I have not offended the god of my city.²

The Book of the Dead gives a similar ethical ideal, but expressed as a Litany addressed to the various gods, also with a declaration of innocence in negative form. This is long, but a few stanzas will illustrate:

1. Griffith, op. cit., IX, 5317.

2. Ibid., IX, 5321, 5322.

LITANY

Homage to thee, O Lord of starry deities in Annu, and of heavenly things in Eber-Aga; thou god Unti, who are more glorious than the gods who are hidden in Annu; O grant thou unto me a path wherein I may pass in peace, for I am just and true; I have not spoken lies wittingly, nor have I done aught with deceit.

Homage to thee, O Soul of everlastingness, thou Soul who dwellest in Tattu, Unnefer, son of Nut; thou art lord of Akert. O grant thou unto me a path wherein I may pass in peace, for I am just and true; I have not spoken lies wittingly, nor have I done aught with deceit.

Homage to thee, O thou who retest upon Right and Truth; thou art the lord of Abtu, Abydos, and thy limbs are joined unto Tatches-ertet; thou art he to whom fraud and guile are hateful. Oh, grant thou unto me a path wherein I may pass in peace, for I am just and true; I have not spoken lies wittingly, nor have I done aught with deceit.¹

The Eastern horizon was an analog for the entry into Paradise, the wonderful home of the Blessed. Coffins of the Middle Kingdom almost always have some texts relating to this idea. To know the way, to be able to repeat some of the particulars, to describe the scenes, to take part in the journey of the god, all this was to insure a joyous experience in the next world, and evidently the writing on the coffin guaranteed it:

I know the central door from which Re issues in the east. . . .
I am the keeper of the halyard in the boat of the god;
I am the oarsman who does not weary in the boat of Re.²

A charm to "conjure" for the cure of snake-bite gives the significance of the name, and reminds one of the later reverence for the name of God, the "Unpronounceable Name" among the Hebrews. According to this charm, the Goddess Isis employed snake venom against Re, the Sun God, in order to learn his sacred name, since as long as he kept it hidden he could have power over those who did not know it. But he was on the point of death from the poison of the serpent—evidently gods could die!

1. Brown, op. cit., p. 174.

2. Pritchard, op. cit., p. 12.

ISIS: Tell me thy name, my divine father. . . .

RE: I am he who made heaven and earth,
 Who knotted together the mountains. . . .
 Who opened his eyes so light came into being;
 Who closed his eyes that darkness might fall. . . .
 But whose name the gods have not learned.

ISIS: Thy name is not really among those which
 thou hast told me.
 If thou tellest it to me, then the poison
 will come forth,
 For a person whose name is pronounced lives.

The great god then divulged his name to Isis, the Great
 of Magic.

Re is living; the poison is dead.

_____ the son of _____ is living,
 And the poison is dead, through the speech of Isis, the
 Great,
 The mistress of the gods, who knows Re by his own name.¹

This charm was recited over the persons suffering from snake-bite, and also written on papyrus to lay over the wound. Whether it cured or not is a question, but its use continued for hundreds of years.

2. Mesopotamia

In Mesopotamia there was not such an optimistic outlook on death as in Egypt. While it probably reflects earlier beliefs, the Gilgamesh epic belongs to this period and shows what men were believing then. Tablets dug up at Nippur and Kish of the Second Millennium B.C. give the Sumerian account of "Gilgamesh and the Land of the Living," earliest of several rescensions of the story. Gilgamesh gives reasons for seeking the tree of life:

In my city man dies: oppressed is the heart.
 Man perishes: heavy is the heart.
 I peered over the wall,
 Saw the dead bodies floating on the river.
 As for me, I too will be served thus; verily 'tis so!
 Man, the tallest, cannot stretch to heaven.
 Man, the widest, cannot cover the earth.²

1. Pritchard, op. cit., p. 13.

2. Ibid., p. 12.

Gilgamish had heard that there was a tree in the "land of the living" which he hoped to bring to earth, thinking that if it could be planted there it would bring eternal life to men. At once one is reminded of the "tree of life" that grew in the Garden of Eden (Gen.2:9;3:22). Many stories of this section of the country give interesting parallels to Biblical accounts. In poetic form, they are found in Akkadian, Babylonian, and Assyrian script, in many small tablets dug up from a number of different sites in the land of Mesopotamia.

According to the epic, Gilgamish performed many heroic feats in his attempt to conquer death, but was defeated every time. By not conquering death, they evidently meant that it was impossible to continue life on earth, for they did believe in a sort of existence after death in a shadowy place known as the "land of no return."²

The Babylonian gods had all the vices and apparently few of the virtues of man! They had jealous quarrels, and fought with drastic cosmic results. Tiamat, who was a personification of primordial chaos, was stirred to anger against the other gods and planned total destruction:

Tiamat made mighty her word;
 Evil she cherished against the gods, her offspring. . . .
 . . . (this) to Ea was divulged:
 Tiamat, our mother, has come to hate us.
 She has made weapons without rival, has spawned
 monster-serpents,
 Sharp of tooth, unsparing of fang;
 With poison like blood their bodies she has filled;
 Fierce dragons with terror she has clothed;
 Whoever beholds them, terror overcomes him.
 She has established vipers, serpents, Lakhani,
 Hurricanes, raging hounds, scorpion men,
 Mighty storms, fish-men, and rams;
 They wear merciless weapons, fearless in battle.
 Her behests are mighty; without rivals are they.
 Moreover, eleven such as these she has created.³

1. Pritchard, op. cit., pp. 52-57.

2. George A. Barton, Archaeology and the Bible (Philadelphia: American Sunday School Union, 1937), pp. 282-285: "An Epic of Creation," Tablets II, lines 1-11; III, 82-89.

Marduk, one of the younger gods, was the only one who dared to go forth and fight against Tiamat:

He placed the lightning before his face;
With quivering flame his body he filled;
He made a net to enclose Tiamat's body;
He caused the four winds to seize, so that nothing of her
could escape.

.
And with his unsparing weapon he crushed her head;
He cut through the veins of her blood. . . .
The flesh of the monster he divided; he formed a cunning plan.
He split her open like a flat fish into two halves;
One half of her he established and made a covering of the
heavens. ¹

With the other half he made the earth. Then they searched for the one who had stirred up the jealousy of Tiamat against the other gods:

Kingu it was who caused the strife;
He led the rebellion and brought the battle.
They bound him and brought him before Ea.
Then a curse he laid on him; the blood burst forth from him;
From his blood he made mankind for the service of the gods. ²

There are some apparent traces of similarity between these early Eastern accounts and the story of Creation found in Genesis in the Bible. Somewhat alike, yet how wonderfully different is the Biblical account! Though its present form belongs to a much later age, it reflects "primitive traditions which had come from the naïve thinking of various peoples in the human family."³ But these were made more beautiful and sublime through the understanding of men who "walked with God." The universe was created by the Word of God, and not by warfare among many gods (Gen.1:1; John 1:1). Man was made, not from the blood of an evil beast, but "in the image of God" (Gen.1:26). Biblical patriarchs trace their origin to the Babylonian land, since Abraham came out from Ur (Gen.11:31), but if they brought with them any of these traditions, the leadership of the prophets of God gave them clearer understanding.

1. Barton, *op. cit.*, Tablet IV: 39-42; 130-138.

2. *Ibid.*, Tablet VI: 28-32.

3. Walter Russell Bowie, "Exposition: Genesis," *Interpreter's Bible*, I, 465.

There is a myth found in all these languages about the descent of the Queen of Heaven, in the Sumerian epic known as Inanna, into the lower world. The Queen there is her older sister, but also her bitter enemy, envying her the realms above. Inanna arranged with the other high gods to rescue her if she did not return within a certain time. She arrayed herself in her finest clothes and jewels. She had to pass seven gates, each one in charge of a terrible monster, and at each gate she had to leave some of her things as pledge, so that when she finally arrived before her sister, the Nether Queen, she was naked. She came before her sister on bended knee, but got no favor. The seven dreaded judges pronounced her doom, and she was killed and hanged from a stake. After three days, two spirits from the high gods managed to get in and sprinkle her body sixty times with the water of life, and she revived and fled from the underworld. As she left, she was followed by bogies and harpies, some trying to hold her back, and others to escape with her.

There is a similar epic written in Akkadian, dating from a slightly later time, found in the library of Ashur-Banipal at Nineveh, telling of Ishtar going to the Nether World, with the same experiences as Inanna had earlier. Here there is a vivid description of that dismal land:

To the Land of No Return, the realm of Eresh-kegal,
Ishtar, the daughter of Sin, set her mind;
To the dark house, the abode of Irkalla,
To the house which none could leave who have entered it,
To the road from which there is no way back;
To the house where the dwellers are bereft of light,
Where dust is in their fare, and clay their food. . . .
Where over the door and bolt is spread dust.
When Ishtar reached the gate of the Land of No Return
She said to the Gatekeeper:
"O Gatekeeper, open the gate that I may enter!
If thou openest not the door, I will shatter the bolt,
I will smash the doorpost, I will move the doors,
I will raise the dead . . .
So that the dead will outnumber the living."²

1. Pritchard, op. cit., pp. 52-57.

2. Ibid., p. 107.

The Asshur text, a slightly older recension, reads here, "So that the living will outnumber the dead," which seems to have just the opposite meaning. It may have the same idea: the dead revitalized will outnumber the living on the earth; or the living reclaimed from death will outnumber the dead left there. As Ishtar did not succeed, the meaning makes little difference!

They did have a picture of a beautiful paradise, however—not everything was so dark and dismal. But their paradise was for the gods only—men had no part in it, not even the kings. More gods came into being in this paradise, their birth, like that of human beings, being described at length! They kept their paradise for themselves alone, and the joyous picture painted of it did no good for ordinary mortals. This was quite different from Egypt, where the kings were deified, and where magic texts enabled even the common man to share hopes of a happy life hereafter. But the picture of paradise pleases:

The land of Dilmun is pure;
 The land of Dilmun is pure;
 The land of Dilmun is clean;
 The land of Dilmun is most bright; . . .
 The land of Dilmun is clean; that place is bright.
 In Dilmun the raven utters no cries, . . .
 The lion kills not,
 The wolf snatches not the lamb;
 Unknown is the kid-devouring wild dog; . . .
 The dove droops not her head.
 The singer utters no wail,
 By the side of the city he utters no lament.¹

Recent excavations in Arabia have shed a most interesting light on this land of Dilmun. In September 1953 some American oil men started to look for oil in Arabia with fantastic success. In their work they picked up beads and fragments of bronze weapons, and saw evidence of an ancient civilization. An archaeologist was brought over to make investigations. He found the most interesting section at the oil company base near Dharam, where there were many burial mounds. After months of excavation and research, he was able to identify the people buried in these mounds.

1. Pritchard, *op. cit.*, p. 38.

2. Cornwall, "In Search of Arabia's Past," p. 513.

They were known as Dilmunites; their kings ruled over (this land) for at least two thousand years, and they fought and traded with Sumerians, Assyrians, and many others.

Except for one cuneiform inscription found here, all our written sources for Dilmun come from the Babylonians and Assyrians. These records tell that Dilmun was a "holy land" to the Sumerians. . . .To this land the demigod Gilgamesh journeyed to learn the secret of life from the wise Ziusdra, he who had been given eternal life "like unto the gods."¹

This seems to lend weight to the tradition that Arabia was the ancient home of the Semites, the place from which wave after wave of migrants went out to find homes in Mesopotamia and Canaan. Dilmun must have been a very different place in those early days to have such glories attached to it, but they are most likely the homesick longings of an emigrant people for the homeland. In retrospect it was a land of beauty, no matter what had happened to drive them out from it to distant lands.

One of the most interesting discoveries in Mesopotamia was a Sumerian list of literary compositions, compiled about 2000 B.C., the "oldest literary catalog." In this list are epics: recounting feats of Enmerkar, Lugalbanda, and Gilgamesh, with the god Ninurta and the goddess Inanna; myths regarding the organization of the universe, the establishment of civilization, the creation of deities as well as of man, the marriage of the god Martu to the daughter of Numushda of Kazallu, and several Tammuz myths; there were also hymns both royal and divine, particularly to Shulzi, Ur Nammu, Shu-Sin and Ibi-Sin, kings of the Third Dynasty of Ur; lamentations: a long one for the destruction of Ur, another for the destruction of Nippur, and a brief one for some calamity that befel the city of Agadi in the reign of Naram-Sin. There was also a large collection of Wisdom literature, including proverbs, fables, and didactic paragraphs with reference to learning to read and write. One of the particularly interesting things about this catalog is that of the sixty-two titles given, tablets have been found giving the complete or nearly-complete texts of twenty-one.

1. Cornwall, *op. cit.*

2. Samuel N. Kramer, "Oldest Literary Catalog," *Bulletin*, A.S.O.R., No. 88, (1942), p. 12.

There are also Akkadian and Cappadocian texts from Nuzi that belong to this early Agade period, one of which is a map which had to do with the identification of royal lands. This is the oldest map so far discovered.¹

C. Abraham from Ur

It was from such a civilization as this that Abram went out from Ur to found a new nation in Palestine. His were the days of the closing dynasty of Ur and the growing power of Babylon. Abram may have been contemporary with King Hammurabi, famed for his legal codifications. He may be linked with the great Aramaic migratory movements by: "a wandering Aramaean was my father"² (Deut. 26:5). These people are spoken of as coming from the south, from Arabia, "flowing as from a watershed" into the fertile lands to the north and west.³ There is a legend that Abram's father Terah was a maker of idols, but that Abram proved that they were powerless, and urged the family to move away from Ur.⁴ That will have to remain unproved and also unprovable. Abram and his family lived in Haran for some years. There, the background is illuminated by archaeological discoveries. This was the chief town of the region known as Padan Aram, and names found in Abram's family tree are names of settlements in this region: Haran, Peleg, Serug, Nahor, Terah: all are found in Genesis 11:18-24. These are patriarchal clan names, either given by the clans to the towns they founded, or taken by the clans from the towns they seized during the disturbances of the Second Millennium.⁵ Texts from Nuzi reflect the same type of life that is recorded in Genesis. In Haran Abram found worship similar to that he had left in Ur. The ruins of an old temple to the Moon God are there.⁶

1. Theophile James Meek, "The Akkadian and Cappadocian Texts from Nuzi," Bulletin, A.S.O.R., No. 48(1932), p. 2.

2. DeLacy O'Leary, Grammar of the Semitic Language (London, 1933) Introduction.

3. A. DuPont Sommer, Les Aramaeans, Chap. I.

4. Joseph Gaer, The Lore of the Old Testament (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1951), pp. 86,87.

5. Wright-Filson, ed., Westminster Historical Atlas to the Bible (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1945), p. 25.

6. Philip Hitti, History of Syria (London: Macmillan and Company, Ltd., 1951) p. 68.

1. Abraham's Journey to Canaan

The Bible narrative gives credence to the thought that this false worship disturbed Abram. God called him—the way is not stated, but in a way that he definitely recognized—so Abram left Haran and journeyed on toward Canaan. He probably followed the caravan route through Aleppo, where there is a story told at the Mohammedan mosque within the citadel, that this was built over the place where Abram milked a cow!¹ (Abram probably had many servants to milk any cows he might have.) Abram doubtless had a large caravan. Even after his clan was divided when Lot moved on toward Sodom, he was able to put three hundred eighteen men into his army against the kings of the East, which shows that his was no small group (Gen.14:14). During the excavations at Dhiban in Moab in the spring of 1955, in an attempt to find the palace of King Mesha (II Kings 3:4), the workmen were from a Bedouin tribe that claimed very ancient descent, and that they were living as their ancestors had lived for millennia. The workmen were not hired direct, but the Sheik of Sheiks oversaw the hiring, being very careful that the four or five Sheiks under his jurisdiction were equally represented among the laborers. The archaeological group was entertained at a "mensif" or feast at the encampment of the Sheik of Sheiks which included many tents. Later another mensif was held at a Sheik's tent, which might have been more like that of Abraham (the change of name is recorded in Genesis 17). Tents in that country are rated according to the number of poles, and this was a "five-poler"; from each pole was hung an oriental rug which divided the tent into "rooms." The men sat on cushions on an oriental rug laid on the ground, and as they were partaking of the meal every now and then one of the women in the next room would peer over the top of the rug, which was reminiscent of Sarah listening "at the tent door behind him" when Abraham entertained angels (Gen.18:10).

Soon thereafter came the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah and the other cities of the plain, which are now thought to be buried under the waters of the southern end of the Dead Sea. These cities were probably built near the

The guide told that story as though he believed it! (October, 1954)

rivers emptying into the Sea, though their exact location is not known. They were destroyed when "the Lord rained . . . brimstone and fire from the Lord out of heaven" (Gen.19:24), which probably meant lightning, most likely in connection with storm and earthquake. The great conflagration, the smoke of which Abraham could see from Hebron (Gen.19:28), was possibly caused by oil pockets catching fire and exploding. Oil is found in some of that country, and the "bitumen pits" (Gen.14:10) may suggest it.¹ Hot sulphur springs which fall in cascades down some of the eastern hills to this day give credence to the "brimstone" of the Bible narrative. At Bab-ed-Dhra, on a hilltop not far from the Dead Sea, which is thought to have been a High Place of pilgrimage for the people of those cities, there are still standing some of the stones of their gilgal, the Palestinian name for the cromlechs. Nearby are hearths which show no sign of ever having permanent houses over them, and are very likely remains of festival booths such as the Israelites built during the Feast of Tabernacles (Lev.23:33,42). Not far away is a cemetery.²

It is possible that Abraham brought with him out of Ur some of the little clay tablets containing writings of their epics, with which he must have been familiar. What would render this unlikely, however, is the fact that he was turning away from idolatry. But, knowing how carefully the Israelites kept their patronymic lists, it might well be that he brought with him accounts of his ancestors. The genealogical lists in Genesis may be some of the oldest writings in the Bible. While the connection of the Creation and Flood stories in Genesis is clear in spite of the higher plane of the Biblical narrative, the contact could, and probably did, come later, perhaps during the Babylonian Captivity. Certainly the Genesis account is simple and beautiful, without all the many gods and the imaginings of the Eastern versions. This may have been kept pure, as the various legends that come down in folklore would indicate; or it may have been purged of all idolatries by the prophets of God, which would be the more historical explanation.

1. Penrose Harland, "Sodom and Gomorrah," I. "The Location of the Cities of the Plain," Bib. Arch., V(1942) 18 ff. II. "The Destruction of the Cities of the Plain," Ibid., VI(1943) 41.

2. Visited in May, 1955.

2. Abraham Conformed to Palestinian Burial Practice

When Sarah died, Abraham conformed to the burial customs of the land in which he dwelt. It was not necessary to dig graves in Palestine as it was in Mesopotamia, though some graves were dug even at this early date; but the majority of burials were in caves, and so it is recorded of Abraham:

And Sarah died at Kiriath-arba (that is, Hebron) in the land of Canaan; and Abraham went in to mourn for Sarah and to weep for her. And Abraham rose up from before his dead, and said to the Hittites, "I am a stranger and a sojourner among you; give me property among you for a burying place, that I may bury my dead out of my sight." The Hittites answered Abraham, "Hear us, my lord; you are a mighty prince among us. Bury your dead in the choicest of our sepulchers; none of us will withhold from you his sepulcher, or hinder you from burying your dead." Abraham rose and bowed to the Hittites, the people of the land. And he said to them, "If you are willing that I should bury my dead out of my sight, hear me and entreat for me Ephron, the son of Zohar, that he may give me the cave of Machpelah, which he owns; it is at the end of the field. For a full price let him give it to me in your presence as a possession for a burying place." . . . So the field of Ephron in Machpelah, which was to the east of Mamre, the field with the cave which was in it and all the trees that were in the field, throughout its whole area, was made over to Abraham as a possession in the presence of the Hittites, before all who went in at the gate of the city. After this, Abraham buried Sarah his wife. (Gen.23:2-20)

This is the first account of a burial in the Old Testament, and it explains several things: that the Hittites were the people of the land at that time; that there was a ceremony connected with the purchase of land, which involved exact description of the property, and witnesses before an official court "at the gate of the city"; and that there was some sort of ritual connected with burial. Later it is recorded of the death of Abraham:

Abraham breathed his last and died in good old age, an old man and full of years, and was gathered to his people. Isaac and Ishmael his sons buried him in the cave of Machpelah, in the field of Ephron the son of Zohar the Hittite, east of Mamre, the field which Abraham purchased from the Hittites. There Abraham was buried with Sarah his wife. (Gen.25:8-10)

That Abraham was "gathered to his people" seems to suggest the thought of his going to some place beyond this earth where others had preceded him, since Sarah was the only one buried in that cave, and would not be "people." Later Isaac and Rebekkah, and Jacob and Leah, were buried there, and according to tradition their bones are still in the cave, over which the great Mosque at Hebron stands. The cave is so holy that nobody is allowed to enter it nor to see it except through a small hole in the floor of the Mosque. Looking down one can see nothing but a light, which is kept burning there all the time. The lamp is drawn up on a chain to have its oil replenished. Inside the mosque are six very ornate sepulchers, which have been built over the traditional sites of the graves of the patriarchs.¹

D. Hittite Burial Customs

The Hittites, from whom Abraham purchased the burial cave, were unknown except for the Bible account, until a large archive of cuneiform tablets was dug up in 1906 at Boghaz-koi, and their background is still a mystery. There are six different languages among the tablets, showing their wide contacts: with Semitic and Aramaean groups; with Indo-Aryan clans probably from Lycia; an as-yet unread set which may connect them with a Mongolian race, which their earliest statues resemble, and like their representations on Egyptian monuments. Their early sculptures were crude and heavy, which may not be due so much to their lack of artistic skill as to the heavy granite stone that they used. By 2000 B.C. they were strong not only in their cities in the north, but had taken over nearly all the land of Canaan, and were contending with Egypt for the mastery of the whole region.²

Among the tablets found at Boghaz-koi, the ruins of Hatusa, the early capital of the Hittite empire, were records of a Hittite burial, dated about 1900 B.C., which would be near the time of Abraham. The ritual for the burial of a king or queen is given. The ceremony took thirteen days. For two days the body lay on a slow funeral pyre, burning until only the bones were left.

1. Visited in October and again in December, 1954.

2. George Aaron Barton, Semitic and Hamitic Origins, Social and Religious (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1934), pp. 46-49.

Then the fire was extinguished with the finest wine, and women collected the bones and placed them in a silver jar of fine oil for two days. Then on the cooled funeral pyre they placed twelve loaves of bread, and cakes of tallow. The bones were taken out and dried for a day on a fine linen cloth, then put on a chair, wrapped in a fresh cloth. Hot loaves of bread of three kinds were offered before them. Then there were three days of funeral feasting, food and drink being offered to the "bones" first, with ritual incantations. Then came the sacrifices: two oxen and two lots of nine sheep each. Half were sacrificed to the sun goddess, and half to the soul of the departed, all sharing in the feast, however, while an old woman performed magic rites. Then the bones were placed in an inner tomb with a lamp and a vessel of fine oil.¹ When the tomb was sealed, there was another sacrifice of one ox and one sheep.

This is the first direct insight into the preparation of the body for the burial of the bones alone. There were many different types of burial, from absolute cremation to the careful preservation of the body, as in the Egyptian treatment of mummies. The two customs seem poles apart: one to get rid of the body so that the spirit might be freed; the other, to keep the body for the habitation of the spirit. Then there were the intermediate types that got rid of the flesh but preserved the bones; and those caring for the skulls carefully and piling the bones irregularly. However the body was treated, there was definite treatment, and evidently a connection between this treatment and the belief concerning the needs of the living person in an existence after death. All, with the possible exception of Israel, made preparation for a material life much like that on earth, burying a great variety of things in the grave for use in that other world.

1. O. R. Gurney, The Hittites (Baltimore: Penguin Books, Inc., 1952) pp. 163-165.

CHAPTER VIII

THE LATE BRONZE AND THE IRON PERIODS 1800—500 B.C.

A. Characterized by Inter-Nationalism

During the Late Bronze Period there was a great increase of commercial life and correspondence among the various nations which extended on into all subsequent ages. This started a new era, sometimes spoken of as the age of internationalism. There had been some inter-communication in earlier times, but this was on a large scale.¹ Sargon the Great of Agade, in his own records called himself "King of the Four Quarters of the World" and archaeological records confirm his statement as no idle boast, for his kingdom extended from the Indus Valley to the British Isles, and he is even counted by some students as the legendary Menes of the First Dynasty of Egypt.² This seems to be an extreme statement, but after reading the language analysis that Dr. Hrozny makes of the Hittite tablets of Boghaz-koi, there seems to be ample basis for its acceptance.

The Boghaz-koi tablets are written in at least six languages, and their statues show several very different types of people. Recent excavations at Ras Shamra add still other groups. Dr. Hrozny has devised an elaborate scheme of migrations from analyzing these languages and comparing them with the tongues of other people. Indo-European groups came from Russia down through the Caucasus and into Mesopotamia, then went into Asia Minor, there meeting and joining other Indo-Europeans coming from central Europe through Macedonia and across the Bosphorus, some of whom went on to India. Meanwhile, others of this same group had gone west into northern Europe, and on to become the Celts of the British Isles, while part of them turned south to Italy or crossed the

1. James Henry Breasted, The Conquest of Civilization (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1926), p. 1.

2. L. A. Waddell, Egyptian Civilization, Its Sumerian Origin and Real Chronology (London: Luzac and Company, 1930), pp. 11, 12.

Pyrenees into Spain. Part of the movement toward India was deflected into China, there meeting and mingling with an unknown ancient people; and some of these moved on across Siberia and over the land-bridge to Alaska, where they founded a settlement. From Asia Minor they penetrated into the Semitic settlements of Palestine.¹ All this makes the American "Melting-pot" seem very mild indeed, and it is only part of the story.

The incursions of these other people into their land caused further displacement among the Semites, who had a background of roving from the earliest antiquity. At this time they "burst the ancient barriers of Egypt" and conquered that country. The Egyptians spoke of their conquerors very slightly as "Shepherds" or "Hyksos." but they were mainly civilized Syrians and Canaanites, and probably brought with them Anatolian and Indo-European warriors, and some of the arts and crafts of their homelands.²

The Philistines found a home on the shores of the Mediterranean, coming from Crete or Cappadocia. They are shown with head-dresses of feathers, like those of the Lycians of Asia Minor.³ An echo of their movements is found in the Bible:

"Are you not like the Ethiopians unto me,
O people of Israel?" says the Lord;
"Did I not bring Israel from the land of Egypt,
And the Philistines from Caphtor, and the
Syrians from Kir?" (Amos 9:7)

There were settlements in Phoenicia from very early times; the people called themselves Canaanites and gave their name to the land until the Philistines took over. Byblos was the early center of Phoenician culture, but as the new age came into being other centers developed, both Sidon and Tyre growing more powerful and giving their names to Phoenician activity. There was a new awakening, due either to an influx of new people, or to their own commercial interests. Phoenician ships sailed the seas, claiming to have

1. Bedrich Hrozný, Ancient History of Western Asia, India, and Crete, trans. Jindrich Prochaska (New York: Philosophical Society, 1953), p. 105.

2. H. R. Hall, The Ancient History of the Near East (London: Methuen and Company, Ltd., 1950), p. 213.

3. Stanley Arthur Cook, "Philistines," Ency. Brit. (1946), XVII, 735, 736

circum-navigated the continent of Africa; her sailors dared to pass through the Pillars of Hercules to trade with northern Spain, bringing tin from there, and traditionally from Cornwall also. Amber such as is known only from the Baltic Sea was among her imports.¹ She joined with King Solomon of Israel in a commercial venture in the east, with Ezion-geber as the port, on the Gulf of Aqaba, trading with Ophir, usually identified with the eastern coast of Africa (I Kings 9:26; II Chron.8:17). It may have been her vessels which brought things from India by the sea route also. Phoenician colonies were planted in North Africa and on several islands of the Mediterranean Sea, with strong fortifications to protect them.² Biblical reference to these commercial enterprises is found in the Lament over Tyre:

Tarshish trafficked with you because of your great wealth of every kind; silver, iron, tin, and lead they exchanged for your wares. Javan, Tubal, and Meshech traded with you; they exchanged the persons of men and vessels of bronze for your merchandise. Beth-togarmah exchanged for your wares horses, war horses, and mules. The men of Rhodes traded with you; many coastlands were your own special markets, they brought you in payment ivory tusks and ebony. Edom trafficked with you because of your abundant goods; they exchanged for your wares emeralds, purple, embroidered work, fine linen, coral and agate. Judah and the land of Israel traded with you; they exchanged for your merchandise wheat, olives, and early figs, honey, oil, and balm. Damascus trafficked with you for your abundant goods, because of your great wealth of every kind; wine of Helbon, and white wool, and cassia, and calamus were bartered for your merchandise. Dedan traded with you in saddlecloths for riding. Arabia and all the princes of Kedar were your favored dealers in lambs, rams, and goats; . . . The traders of Sheba and Raamah traded with you; they exchanged for your wares the best of all kinds of spices, and all precious stones and gold. Haran, Canneh, Eden, Asshur, and Chilmad . . . traded with you in choice garments, in clothes of blue and embroidered work, and in carpets of colored stuff.
(Ezek.27:12-25)

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1. George Albert Cooke, "Phoenicia," Ency. Brit. (1946), XVII, 765-772
 2. J. N. Larned, ed., History for Ready Reference (Springfield, Mass.: The C. A. Nichols Co., Publishers, 1901. 7 Vols.), IV, 2600,2601.

This takes no account of the camel caravans that came with spices from India. Pottery types from Mari and other Near Eastern cultures have been found in India. Camel trains went to Asia Minor and to Egypt. All of these passed through the "land bridge" which was Palestine, making the long trip around the "fertile crescent" rather than facing the rigors of the desert.¹

B. The Exchange of Ideas Included Religious Ones

The effect of all this inter-communication upon religion was prodigious. Much of the early religion centered around the natural events of life: the change of the year, seedtime and harvest, sunrise and sunset, the phases of the moon, the rising of the evening star. It would not be surprising to find some similarity, since nature is very much the same everywhere. But the analogy is often so close as to suggest religious as well as other cultural and commercial exchange. Perhaps it would be quite natural that a nation should accept the gods of their conquerors, since there was often sufficient similarity to make the matter more a syncretism than an exchange:

Acceptance of foreign gods did not necessarily involve much alteration of religious ideas. What often happened was that the native god was simply identified with the great god of the conqueror without any great change in the way he was thought of and worshiped.²

1. Fertility Cults

The Sun God and the Earth Goddess seem to be chiefly worshiped everywhere, with lesser deities in their train. Hadad or Adad, Dagon, Chemosh, Resheph, Mekal, Marduk—by whatever names they were known, the characteristics were similar. The same thing could be said for the goddesses: Astarte, Ashtart, Ashtoreth, Istar, Inanna, Anat, most of whom were fertility goddesses that were worshiped in the hope of having fields of grain or other produce of the fruitful earth. The Israelites were constantly warned against these gods of

1. Breasted, The Conquest of Civilization, p. 5.

2. Millar Burrows, What Mean These Stones (New Haven, Conn.: American Schools of Oriental Research, 1941), p. 223

the nations about them, and seem to have kept apart--then it is a distinct shock to discover the Canaanite god at Ras Shamra by the name of El, the singular form of the Elohim of the E-documents in the Old Testament. While the name is the same, the type of worship is different, and in Israel there was no feminine form, Elat, as found at Ras Shamra.¹ Still more abhorrent to a follower of the God of the Old Testament who considers that God as the One and Only, differing from all the pagan deities, is the derivation Dr. Hrozný gives for the most sacred name. He finds a Hittite god, Yayash, sometimes written Yaya, represented by a sacred tree. He derives the name from the root verb ei, ia, or eo, "to go" and takes it to mean the daily pilgrimage of the sun across the heavens. He finds amulets bearing inscriptions of this god in India and Crete, showing the wide distribution of that worship. All of this is merely interesting until he identifies this god with the Semitic Jahweh, and the sacred tree with the burning bush which Moses saw at the time the Sacred Name was divulged to him. He defends this identification by the migration of Midianites to Mitanni.² Perhaps the early derivation should add to the appreciation of the purity of the later development.

In many countries there is a young god of vegetation who stands for the change of seasons, and whose death and resurrection represent the winter's sleep and spring's awakening. Thus in the Ugaritic pantheon there is Mot or Muth, the god of death, who kills Aleyan Baal; his resurrection is part of the spring festival. Something similar is found in the young Adonis, in Teshub, in Tammuz, and even in Osiris. The Egyptian Osiris is somewhat different from the others, since he is the older god instead of the young one, and Horus, the son, helps his mother Isis find and bring back to life the father Osiris. Also, he does not remain on earth as the springing green, but is sent down to the lower world to preside as judge over the dead. However, his legend includes a resurrection idea, and all the religions seem to be leading to some thought of a resurrection. Human life, having no return to earth after death, must be found to continue in some other realm.³

1. Leslie, Old Testament Religion, p. 22.

2. Hrozný, op. cit., pp. 182, 183.

3. Burrows, op. cit., pp. 229, 230.

In a country as arid as Palestine, where living was so precarious, the fertility cult acquired a greater importance than elsewhere. All sorts of rites were entered into, attempting to assure a good harvest. At Ras Shamra and in Phoenicia, the Adonis gardens were planted at the spring festival accompanied by the pouring of water brought in special jars from the "source" of the river, and sprinkling the blood of the sacrifice over the field. It might have been a year of special drought that suggested the first human sacrifice for the occasion. Perhaps it was some sort of magic rite to gain a bountiful crop that led to sacred prostitution. Whatever may have been the cause, it became a continued custom, so that in later years Eusebius designated the Astarte temple as a "school of wickedness for all votaries of impurity." Every woman was expected to give one child to the god. This was usually done before her marriage, and the child offered in sacrifice. Such rites became deeply rooted in all the North Semitic area. Carried to the East, this cult developed in Babylon three classes of sacred prostitution: the consecrated woman, who dedicated the child of her temple prostitution to the god of her father's choice; the "hierodule" who remained permanently at the shrine for the use of the worshiper and presented the children for the sacrificial offering to the god; and those who served for "hire" presenting both the child and the money to the god. In the case of the "consecrated" one, she was not considered contaminated by this rite; the man in the case was a stranger, usually one of the priests at the shrine. To be fair to them it must be recognized that this was not the expression of common lust, but a mystical and religious idea: representative and substitutional, as every woman became an Astarte, a Venus, and every man an Adonis.¹ Nevertheless this was a dangerous practice, and cemeteries of babies surrounding these shrines are pitiful reminders of a religion that fortunately has perished from the earth. For all its culture and the artistry of its handcrafts, Phoenicia had this flaw, and carried its influence to her North African colonies, where altars surrounded by such cemeteries have been excavated.²

1. Leslie, *op. cit.*, p. 48.

2. Melvin Grove Kyle, The Deciding Voice of the Monuments in Biblical Criticism (Oberlin, Ohio: Bibliotheca Sacra Company, 1924), p. 25.

That the Hebrews at an early date shared the superstitions and followed the cultic practices of other Semitic peoples is conclusive. Scattered all through the Old Testament are references to early beliefs and practices which are clues to the historians, as fossils in the rock to a geologist, and constitute his chief source for nomadic religion among the Semites.¹

Abraham lived in the land of Canaan, where the example of his neighbors, and perhaps their urgency as well, called him to sacrifice his son.² The story of the substitute which God provided is well known:

And Abraham lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, behind him was a ram, caught in a thicket by his horns; and Abraham went and took the ram, and offered it up as a burnt offering instead of his son. (Gen.22:13)

Later Moses, under the direction of God, gave the people substitutes for the gift to God of the first-born. There was thus the recognition that the sacrifice to God was essential, and that it demanded the gift of the most precious thing, the "first-born," but that the form was wrong:

All that opens the womb is mine, all your male cattle, the firstlings of cow and sheep . . . all the first-born of your sons you shall redeem. (Ex.34:19,20)

2. Development of Myth and Ritual

"Nothing is less exclusive than superstition; and nothing travels faster and further than folk tale."³ By the Late Bronze Period the myths and legends of the countries had been exchanged and accepted. Tablets containing part of the epic of Gilgamesh from Babylon were used in Egypt for school exercises.⁴ This would prepare them for better living, for the cultivation of myth and fantasy, according to present psychological teaching, prepares for success later in fields of thought which need a cultivated intuition.⁵

1. Harris, The Hebrew Heritage, p. 47.

2. Kyle, op. cit., pp. 256, 257.

3. Goer, The Lore of the Old Testament, p. 7.

4. Samuel A. Mercer, ed., asst., F. H. Halleck, The Tell el Amarna Tablets (Toronto: The Macmillan Company of Canada, 1939, 2 Vols.), II, 798.

5. Ulich, The Human Career, p. 96.

a. Egypt. Elaborate ritual developed in Egypt in spite of their reputed conservatism. Mysticism and symbolism can never be primitive, at least in completed form. They are well-meant attempts by cultivated religious thinkers of later days to read deep-seated meaning into crude ideas and practices of early traditions and beliefs. Stories that long existed as folk tales are now woven into patterns and fitted to cultic rites. Part of this was a natural development; but the final stage when it was committed to writing shows careful analysis and artistic work. Thus the cult forms are symbolically explained and the myths, originally stories portraying the events of nature, are adapted to these ceremonies.¹ When this stage is reached one would expect to find quite a divergence, even though both nature and human nature are similar everywhere. On the contrary, however, both myth and symbol are similar in all lands, and even the cultic rites are strangely alike though names differ. This points to the exchange of ideas and beliefs, paralleling the commercial relations between all parts of the world.

Tomb chambers in Egypt at this period show beautiful pictures of life after death and the measures to be taken to insure its continuance. The concept is ethical at least in part, for Osiris is shown weighing the souls. That the ceremonial observances carry the greatest weight is not surprising, for their ethical ideals have not advanced very far. It is still an age of cruelty and privilege. In the tomb of Seti I in the valley of the Kings at Thebes, death is represented as a river between two worlds, and the soul is shown as a body swimming under water, particularly having to swim under a bridge. This can be accomplished only if one is worthy, and there are creatures in the water ready to devour the unhappy ones who fail. On the far shore some of the gods are waiting to receive the fortunate ones who can swim across.² Tomb texts show prayers for the dead to the gods who can help in the journey, and magic texts which will also guarantee a safe crossing. There are also descriptions of the land toward which the dead are traveling, some of which have a very optimistic message:

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1. George Foote Moore, The Birth and Growth of Religion, p. 120.
 2. Visited in December, 1954.

The land of eternity, the right and true, without terrors;
 All our kinfolk rest in it since the first day of time;
 Those who are to be for millions and millions,
 With all who have come to it.
 There exists none who may tarry in the land of Egypt.
 There is not one who fails to reach yon place.
 As for the duration of what is done on earth,
 It is a kind of dream,
 But they say, "Welcome, safe and sound," to him who reaches
 the West.¹

The texts are not always so hopeful, however. This one, on the walls of King Tut-ankh-Amen's tomb, shows quite a different outlook:

It has no water! It has no air!
 Deep, deep, dark, dark, boundless, boundless,
 Where thou livest in peace in the silent land.
 Pleasures are not enjoyed, but a blessed state is given thee.
 Peace of heart is recompence for bread and wine.²

While the text says that pleasures are not to be enjoyed, they did everything possible to give him all the pleasures of this life in high degree. Treasures from his tomb fill a whole wing of the Cairo Museum. The gorgeous wall paintings, one of his golden mummy cases in the marble sarcophagus, and a few other things have been left in his very beautiful tomb in the Valley of the Kings to show how they were placed originally. His carefully mummified body was placed in three anthropoid cases, one inside the other, each representing him in his ceremonial robes, overlaid with gold and decorated with jewels. The sarcophagus was in the center of the tomb chamber, inside three golden rooms, one inside the other, in which statues of the gods were placed to watch over his safety.³ Rooms opening off the chamber were filled with furnishings for his life in the next world: his bed, couch, chariots, caskets of jewels, tables and chairs, chests and all sorts of smaller objects: game boards, dishes, and even trays of food. There were haunches of venison, trussed ducks, game, bread and cakes, and a great variety of fruit for the next world.⁴

1. Pritchard, *op. cit.*, p. 32.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 9.

3. Warren Royal Dawson, "Mummies," *Ency. Brit.* (1946), XV, 954-956.

4. Maynard Owen Williams, "At the Tomb of Tut-ankh-Amen," *Nat. Geog. Mag.*, 43(1923), 475.

A strange development had come about by this time in the thought of human life. They had learned something about the vital organs of man, and seemed to think that these would be needed in the next life, and so must have special treatment. When the body was mummified, four vital organs were taken out: lungs, liver, kidneys, and brain. These were treated and placed in four small, beautifully decorated caskets known as "canopic jars" and placed in the four corners of the inner golden room. Sometimes forming the lids of the jars and sometimes, as in King Tut-ankh-Amen's tomb, as separate statues standing guard over the jars, were gods of Egypt, a different one for each jar, thus guaranteeing special care in the world beyond.

An interesting development showing some spiritualization of their beliefs even though many material ideas still persisted, is the use of miniature figures to represent the things of life. Instead of the great boats placed in the Pyramid tombs, the discovery of which awakened recent interest,² and which had to be dismantled and taken apart to fit into the tomb chamber even of one so magnificent as the Great Pyramid, there were many small models. This made possible the outfitting for the next world in much more elaborate manner than ever before. It also made it no longer necessary to sacrifice slaves for service there. Small models of men and women were just as effective. These were not toys, though they look like toys. The magical possibility of the models made them seem as dangerous for children as electric toys are actually today.³ Evidently these small models could be enlarged to needed size when they reached the new world. This made possible a life there more exactly like the one on earth, and for people of the modern world gives a more complete understanding of the life in Egypt at that time than could otherwise be known. Tomb pictures are very clear and cover Egyptian life quite completely, but the models are even more accurate and lifelike. A farmyard shows a harvesting scene; another displays cows being milked and butter being made; a fisherman is quite successful, and the cooks are busy at the stove preparing the meals,

1. Madeleine Sweeney Miller and J. Lane Miller, Encyclopedia of Bible Life (New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1944), p. 398.

2. Caffrey, op. cit., Nat. Geog. Mag., 108(1955), 611 f.

3. Albright, From Stone Age to Christianity, p. 127.

and at the tables getting ready to serve them. The horseman rides his steed, the charioteer drives his chariot, the soldiers march out to battle, and the warriot returns victorious; the builder shows the complete process from the brick-making to decorating the finished palace. In fact, there seems to be no part of Egyptian life that is missing.¹

b. Mesopotamia. In the "Land of the Two Rivers" there is a similar development at this time. Here they not only use metal and pottery miniatures in the tombs, but also what might be called "cut-outs"--sometimes in silver or other metal overlaid with gold, sometimes in ivory, or bone; there may have been some wooden ones, but they have not survived. These seem like a child's paper dolls, but they too would be filled with the same dangerous "magic" as the Egyptian models. No doubt they too would be given full bodies in the next world, ready to meet the needs of the departed souls.²

c. Palestine. A similar development took place in Palestine. In one tomb in Jericho, excavated in the winter of 1955, there were over five hundred tiny little pottery vessels, no two exactly alike. The kitchen shelves of heaven would surely be well stocked for some inhabitant! Most of these little miniatures were plain, or smoothly burnished, but some of them were just as beautifully decorated as the large ones of which they were models.³ There were miniature alabaster jars and bowls also, a few preserving their luster even after all the years. Old ideas prevailed along with the new. In the same tomb with the miniatures were large jars, and platters of food had contents still recognizable. Spiritual needs were met by cult objects, although it is not clear just how they were used. Those most frequently found were bones, registered as "flute type," but whether they were ever used as musical instruments or even as whistles is problematical. Figurines there might have been meant for talismans, or perhaps miniature idols, for continuing the worship of earth in the future world.

1. These can be seen in Museums in Egypt, Palestine, Syria, Lebanon and elsewhere.

2. Ibid.

3. These were very frail. It was difficult to clean them without breaking.

d. Phoenicia. Egyptian influence is seen in Phoenicia. In the time of Rameses II the large pottery jars gave way, at least for royalty, to stone sarcophagi. The earliest one known is that of King Ahiiram. This is important both for its witness to Egyptian influence, and for the use of an alphabetic form of writing which developed in Phoenicia, and from which it is thought that our modern alphabet originated. This was the earliest use of this type of alphabetic script known until the discovery of an older and similar one on an inscription in Sinai.¹ Another point of interest in this sarcophagus is that inscribed on its side is a curse upon anyone violating the tomb.²

3. The Fear of Tomb Violation

Very valuable things were buried in the tombs, which would tempt robbers, and evidently there were some people who were not afraid of ghosts, nor of the dead, nor of the curses written on the walls, and not even afraid of punishment from the living if their theft should be discovered! There was basis for the fear of robbers, for very few of the tombs opened by archaeologists have been intact. The Egyptians hid their tombs with false doors, false hallways, and even false tombs. Halfway down the hall leading to the tomb of King Tut-ankh-Amen, a false hallway opens out and leads to what is apparently a shaft tomb, which had been dug into by robbers. The shaft is very deep, and a tomb of some kind opens out from it which was intended to keep the robbers busy and save the real tomb, and the ruse was successful.³ Although valuable things were buried in the tombs, the fear of violation seems to have been more the danger to the departed spirit than of any financial loss. Even the paintings in the tombs were not for people to see, as they were sealed up inside, in the darkness of the tomb. They were for the spirit in the next world, the activities there portrayed making it possible for him to enjoy the same pleasures in his spirit life.

1. Field, "Sinai Sheds Light on the Bible," p. 815.

2. Rene Dussaud, "Quatre Campagne de Fouilles de M. Pierre Montet a Byblos," Syria, 11 (1930), 164.

3. Visited in December 1954.

C. Israel in Egypt

It was during the Late Bronze Period that the story of Joseph is set, and that Jacob went down into Egypt. This was the time when the Hyksos kings were on the throne of Egypt, belonging to the Semitic group, and therefore in some way related to the Israelites. It was during this period in Egypt that the stories of Joseph are set, and that Jacob and his family were settled in Goshen (Gen.46:1-12). It was after the expulsion of these Hyksos rulers that there arose a king who "knew not Joseph" (Ex.1:8, K.J.V.), and that the oppression of Israel began.

1. Ikhnaton and Monotheism

The chronology of these years is not exact, but it was during this time of Israel's sojourn in Egypt that Pharaoh Amenhotep IV tried to force all the country to accept monotheism, moved his capital to Amarna from Thebes, changed his name to Ikhnaton in honor of the new god, and instituted the worship of Aten, the Disc of the Sun, in three-fold aspect of Light, Heat, and Power.¹ He, or some of his priests, established a beautiful ritual for worship, with hymns to be sung. One of these is most interesting in that it parallels rather closely Psalm 104 in the Old Testament.

Beautiful is thy resplendent appearing on the horizon of heaven,
O living Aten, thou who are the beginning of life.

When thou ascendest in the eastern horizon thou fillest every
land with thy beauties;

Thou art fair and great, radiant, high above the earth;
Thy beams encompass the lands to the sum of all that thou hast
created.

How manifold are thy works,

. . . O one god who hast no fellow!

Thou createdst the earth according to thy will, . . .

Its people, its herds, and all flocks;

All that is upon earth going upon feet,

All that is on high and flieth with wings. . . .

Thou makest the seasons to bring into existence all that thou
hast made:

The winter season to refresh them, the heat (to warm them);

James Henry Breasted, "Ikhnaton," Ency. Brit. (1946), XII, 77.

Thou madest the heaven afar off. . . .
 Thou art in my heart. . . .
 The whole earth is in thy hand even as thou hast made them;
 At thy rising all live, at thy setting they die.¹

And here are a few selected lines from Psalm 104 for comparison:

Bless the Lord, O my soul.
 O Lord my God, thou art very great;
 Thou art clothed with honour and majesty;
 Who coverest thyself with light as with a garment;
 Who stretchest out the heavens like a curtain;
 O Lord, how manifold are thy works!
 In wisdom hast thou made them all. . . .
 These wait all upon thee,
 That thou mayest give them their meat in due season. . . .
 Thou openest thine hand,
 They are satisfied with good;
 Thou hidest thy face,
 They are troubled.
 Thou takest away their breath,
 They die and return to dust;
 Thou sendest forth thy spirit, they are created;
 And thou renewest the face of the ground.²

2. The Burial of Jacob: Egyptian Rites.

When Jacob died, Joseph conformed to Egyptian custom for his burial.

A very clear picture of this is given in Genesis:

Then Joseph fell on his father's face, and wept over him and kissed him. And Joseph commanded his servants the physicians to embalm his father. So the physicians embalmed Israel; forty days were required for it, for so many are required for embalming. And the Egyptians wept for him seventy days.

And when the days of weeping for him were past, Joseph spoke to the household of Pharaoh, saying, "If now I have found favor in your eyes, speak, I pray you, in the ears of Pharaoh, saying, 'My father made me swear, saying, "I am about to die; in my tomb which I hewed out for myself in the land of Canaan, there shall you bury me." Now therefore

1. Griffith, "Egyptian Literature," Lib. Wrld's Lit., IX, 5306-5309.

2. Richard G. Moulton, The Modern Reader's Bible, arranged from Eng. Rev. (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1912), pp. 832-834.

let me go up, I pray you, and bury my father; then I will return.'" And Pharaoh answered, "Go up, and bury your father, as he made you swear." So Joseph went up to bury his father; and with him went up all the servants of Pharaoh, the elders of his household, and all the elders of the land of Egypt, as well as all the household of Joseph, his brothers, and his father's household; only their children, their flocks and their herds were left in the land of Goshen. And there went up with them both chariots and horsemen; it was a very great company. . . . They lamented there with a very great and sorrowful lamentation; and he made a mourning for his father seven days. . . . Thus his sons did for him as he had commanded them; for his sons carried him to the land of Canaan, and buried him in the cave of the field of Machpelah, to the east of Mamre, which Abraham bought with the field from Ephron the Hittite, to possess as a burying place. (Gen.50:1-13)

This must be a greatly exaggerated statement, but no doubt it was a very great mourning for Jacob. It impressed the people of Canaan! And apparently to be buried back in the homeland was very important. That Jacob "hewed out" his sepulcher does not seem to agree with the fact of his being buried in the cave which Abraham had bought; but separate niches were often cut into the caves for single burials, and Jacob may have done something of the kind.

3. The Burial of Joseph

Joseph had the same desire, to be buried back in the "homeland" even though he had lived most of his life in Egypt, was married there, and his children were born there. His heart was back in Canaan, and he never forgot that it was the land of God's promise to Abraham. So he made arrangements that he too should be taken back there for burial:

And Joseph said to his brothers, "I am about to die; but God will visit you and bring you out of this land to the land which he swore to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob." Then Joseph took an oath of the sons of Israel, saying, "God will visit you, and you shall carry up my bones from here." So Joseph died . . . and they embalmed him, and he was put in a coffin in Egypt. (Gen.50:24-26)

They did not fulfil their vow immediately, but they did not fail him; many years passed, but when they left Egypt they kept their promise:

And Moses took the bones of Joseph with him; for Joseph had solemnly sworn the people of Israel, saying, "God will visit you; then you must carry my bones with you from here."
(Ex.13:19)

The "bones" or the mummy of Joseph could not have been put in one of the heavy Egyptian sarcophagi, but was probably in one of the light anthropoid cases. It was carried with them, apparently, through all the long wilderness wandering, and then was not buried with the patriarchs in Machpelah:

The bones of Joseph which the people of Israel brought up from Egypt were buried at Shechem, in the portion of ground which Jacob bought from the sons of Hamor, the father of Shechem, for an hundred pieces of money; it became an inheritance of the descendants of Joseph.
(Josh.24:32)

D. Mummification

The process of mummification was an elaborate one. The internal organs were taken out, and the body was soaked in salt for several weeks, then taken out and dried. After that there were many wrappings in linen sheets, converse and lengthwise, attached with cords, linen bandages, or ribbons bearing the name of the deceased. The body was then put in a carton of papyrus moulded to shape, with the features painted on the outer wrappings. Often there was a light coat of plaster over the case before the painting was done. The features were carefully copied as in life, with wig in place and headdress arranged. After that the body was put into a papyrus carton of anthropoid shape, and again the features were carefully painted.¹ There were two objects for this: to preserve the body from decay, and to perpetuate the personal identity. There was also the desire to make necessary preparations for the greatest possible happiness in the next world, so many magical texts and symbols were painted on the case, as well as on the coffin and the tomb. These included particularly the "Horus eye" and the "ankh" for both were very important symbols. Before the final burial there were several ceremonies which also insured the best life in the next world. These included "opening

1. Miller, op. cit., p. 398.

the mouth," "opening the eyes," "opening the ears," "restoring the use of the limbs," and "stimulating the heart." These were all performed by reciting magic formulas, and by placing on the coffin various amulets. No doubt the paintings on the walls of the tomb and the inscription of texts from the Book of the Dead were also part of the ceremony.¹

E. Mourning Ceremonies

The custom of wailing seems to have been a major part of the funeral ceremony in many parts of the world. This no doubt originated naturally from sorrow over the loss of a dear one, but became more ritualistic, even to the extent of hiring mourners for the occasion. Some of the primitive tribes are cited as examples of this custom. Though separated far both geographically and chronologically, the customs seem very like the records of ancient days:

The wail begins frequently before death. . . . They surround a dying person and set up such terrible howling as were enough one would think to fright the soul out of the body. But this is nothing to what succeeds death. The kraal shakes under the raging din; you hear them miles off. When the funeral does not take place the same day the wailing often breaks out with fresh force on that occasion; and it is kept up for periods of hours, to months or even years. Naturally in the latter case it is only certain relatives . . . who indulge in it, and only at stated times.²

F. Mourning in Israel

Lamentations in Israel may have been a little more restrained, but they were considered a ceremonial necessity. One of the clearest pictures of the mourning rites given in the Old Testament is that for King Saul and Jonathan:

Then David took hold of his clothes, and rent them; and so did all the men who were with him; and they mourned and wept and fasted until evening for Saul and for Jonathan his son, and for the people of the Lord and for the house of Israel, because they had fallen by the sword. (II Sam.1:11,12)

1. Miller, op. cit., p. 398.

2. E. Sidney Hartland, "Death and Disposal of the Dead," Ency.Rel.& Eth. IV, 440.

The lament traditionally used on that occasion is recorded:

Thy glory, O Israel, is slain upon thy high places!

How are the mighty fallen!

Ye mountains of Gilboa,

Let there be no dew nor rain upon you,

Nor upsurgings of the deep!

For there the shield of the mighty was defiled,

The shield of Saul, not anointed with oil.

Saul and Jonathan, beloved and lovely!

In life and in death they were not divided;

they were swifter than eagles,

they were stronger than lions.

Ye daughters of Israel, weep over Saul,

who clothed you daintily in scarlet,

who put ornaments of gold upon your apparel.

How are the mighty fallen

in the midst of battle!

Jonathan lies slain upon thy high places.

I am distressed for you, my brother Jonathan.

How are the mighty fallen,

and the weapons of war perished!

While the book of Kings gives more factual accounts of the reigns of the kings of Judah and Israel, Chronicles pays more attention to ceremonial observances, such as the mourning for the death of King Josiah:

All Judah and Jerusalem mourned for Josiah. Jeremiah also uttered a lament for Josiah; and all the singing men and singing women have spoken of Josiah in their laments to this day. They made these an ordinance in Israel; behold they are written in the Laments. (II Chron. 35:24,25)

Because of this, the book of Lamentations has come down in tradition as Jeremiah's "Lament" for the death of King Josiah. If this was the original kernel of the book, it has been so much enlarged and polished as a grand lament for the destruction of Jerusalem at the time of the Babylonian conquest that nothing can be found there distinctive of King Josiah. However, there are verses which give a clear picture of the ceremonies which were in general use for such a time of mourning:

Is it nothing to you, all you who pass by?
Look and see

if there is any sorrow like my sorrow.

Zion stretches out her hands,
but there is none to comfort her;

Behold, O Lord, for I am in distress,
my soul is in tumult,
my heart is wrung within me.

Hear how I groan;
there is none to comfort me.

The elders of the daughters of Zion
sit on the ground in silence;
they have cast dust on their heads
and have put on sackcloth;
the maidens of Jerusalem
have bowed their heads to the ground.
My eyes are spent with weeping;
my soul is in tumult;
My heart is poured out in grief.

(Lam.1:12,17,20,21; 2:10,11)

Women mourners were personified in Rachel, the mother of Joseph, weeping for the destruction of Israel:

A voice is heard in Ramah,
lamentation and bitter weeping.
Rachel is weeping for her children;
she refuses to be comforted for her children
because they are not. (Jer.31:15)

There are many references to such customs in the prophetic writings. Amos, writing against the Northern Kingdom of Israel, shows the judgment that the Lord will bring upon them for their evil doings, which would include many deaths. They would mourn and lament in the same way and with all the rites of other nations:

I will turn your feasts into mourning,
and all your songs into lamentation;
I will bring sackcloth upon all loins,
and baldness on every head;
I will make it like the mourning for an only son,
and the end of it like a bitter day.
(Amos 8:10)

Micah describes some of the gestures of great mourning in which he himself indulges because of the conditions in both Israel and Judah, and calls upon the people to do the same:

For this I will lament and wail;
 I will go stripped and naked;
 I will make lamentation like the jackals,
 and mourning like the ostriches.
 Make yourselves bald and cut off your hair,
 for the children of your delight;
 make yourselves bald as the eagle,
 for they shall go from you into exile.
 (Micah 1:8,16)

Jeremiah foretold of destruction so great that there would be nobody left to do the honors for the dead:

For thus says the Lord: "Do not enter the house of mourning, or go to lament, or bemoan them. . . . Both great and small shall die in this land. They shall not be buried, and no one shall lament for them or cut himself or make himself bald for them. No one shall break bread for the mourner, to comfort him for the dead; nor shall any one give him the cup of consolation to drink for his father or his mother."
 (Jer.16:6,7)

When Ezekiel's wife died, he was forbidden to mourn:

Also the word of the Lord came to me, "Son of man, behold, I am about to take the delight of your eyes away from you at a stroke; yet you shall not mourn or weep, nor shall your tears run down. Sigh, but not aloud; make no mourning for the dead. Bind on your turban, and put your shoes on your feet; do not cover your lips, nor eat the bread of mourners." So I spoke to the people in the morning, and at evening my wife died. And on the next morning I did as I was commanded. (Ezek.24:15-18)

It was not because it was wrong that Ezekiel was forbidden to mourn, but that he might be a sign to the people. They would be so astonished by his failure to give his wife the usual rites that they would question him, and thus give him an opportunity to bring home to them the lesson of Jerusalem's sin and the inevitable destruction.

Mourning customs in Moab are vividly pictured by Isaiah:

The daughter of Dibon has gone up
to the high places to weep;
over Nebo and over Medeba
Moab wails.
On every head is baldness,
every beard is shorn;
In the streets they gird on sackcloth;
on the housetops and in the squares
everyone wails and melts in tears.
Heshbon and Elealeh cry out,
their voice is heard as far as Judah.
(Isa.15:2-4)

A similar picture is given of Moabite mourning in Jeremiah:

For every head is shaved and every beard is cut off;
upon all hands are gashes, and on the loins is sackcloth.
On all the housetops of Moab and in the squares there is
nothing but lamentation.
(Jer.48:37,38)

G. Excessive Mourning Prohibited in Israel

Funeral ceremonies which perhaps date from very ancient time and were current among many of the other nations, are indicated by the laws against Israel's indulging in them. That most of these prohibitions were late in Israel gives the impression that the practices were permissible in the early days. It is probable that they were considered marks of respect, the proper ceremonies for the funeral, customary burial rites, and were acceptable until they were carried to excess. The prohibitions were first given to the priests: they were not to do any of those things because they must keep themselves "perfect" in order to serve at the altar of the Lord, and so that they might be fit to enter the Holy Place (Lev.21:16-24).

And the Lord said to Moses, "Speak to the priests, the sons of Aaron, and say to them that none of them shall defile himself for the dead among his people. .-. They shall not make tonsures upon their heads, nor shave off the edges of their beards, nor make any cuttings in their flesh. They shall be holy to their God."

(Lev.21:1,5,6)

The Deuteronomic code, considered the latest of the laws of Israel, contained similar prohibitions for the people as a whole:

You are the sons of the Lord your God; you shall not cut yourselves or make any baldness on your foreheads for the dead. For you are a people holy to the Lord your God, and the Lord has chosen you to be a people for his own possession, out of all the people that are on the face of the earth. (Deut.14:1,2)

It has been suggested that the "cutting" was to let blood drip on the grave and soak down into the earth, thus establishing a "blood covenant" between the two worlds. But this does not explain the cutting of the hair and trimming of the beard, nor the tearing of the garments. Some of the excessive wailing and other extreme measures in the funeral ceremonies might have arisen out of attempts to drive away any evil spirits that might be trying to get hold of the dead man's soul—an analogy from such customs among some primitive tribes today. An entirely different suggestion that has been given is that these rites were often entered into with the desire of avoiding any suspicion of being the persons responsible for the death, there being very cruel punishment meted out to those who brought on death by witchcraft, the "evil eye" or other form of magical control.¹ There may be an indication of this last idea in the mourning of King David for Abner:

Then David said to Joab and to all the people who were with him, "Rend your clothes, and gird on sackcloth, and mourn before Abner." And King David followed the bier. They buried Abner at Hebron; and the king lifted up his voice and wept at the grave of Abner; and all the people wept. . . . Then all the people came to persuade David to eat bread while it was yet day; but David swore, saying, "God do so to me and more also, if I taste bread or anything else till the sun goes down." And all the people took notice of it, and it pleased them; as everything that the king did pleased all the people. So all the people and all Israel understood that day that it had not been the king's will to slay Abner, the son of Ner.

(II Sam.3:31-37)

1. Munro, "Death Customs," Ency. Rel. & Eth., IV, 470.

H. Human Sacrifices

Canaanite practices of human sacrifices continued and probably increased in number and in frenzy during this period, and the Israelites were too often tempted to follow the custom also. Some sort of memorial ceremony was held at the graves from time to time also, as the vestibule entrances would give indication, some of which were equipped with tables as well as altars. One such custom is recorded in Israel: the young women went out every year to lament for the daughter of Jephthah, "four days in the year." This was a funeral lament, but had special significance because Jephthah's daughter was a human sacrifice (Judges 11:40).

1. Vows

Human sacrifices were forbidden in Israel, but the vow was different. The first-born was holy unto the Lord, but a substitute was offered for the first-born of human beings. There was no such substitute, however, when it was the case of a vow:

But no devoted thing that a man devotes to the Lord, of anything that he has, whether of man or beast, or of his inherited field, shall be sold or redeemed; every devoted thing is most holy to the Lord. No one devoted, who is to be utterly destroyed from among men, shall be ransomed; he shall be put to death. (Lev.27:28,29)

Jephthah was true to his vow, even to the sacrifice of his only daughter; and the daughter was true also:

Then Jephthah came to his house at Mizpeh; and behold his daughter came out to meet him with timbrels and with dance; and she was his only child; beside her he had neither son nor daughter. And when he saw her, he rent his clothes and said, "Alas, my daughter; you have brought me very low, and you have become a cause of great trouble for me; for I have opened my mouth to the Lord, and I cannot take back my vow." And she said to him, "My father, if you have opened your mouth to the Lord, do to me according to what has gone forth from your mouth, now that the Lord has avenged you on your enemies. . . . And her father . . . did with her according to the vow which he had made.

(Judges 11:34-39)

There seems to be a reflection of this law of the vow in the Fifteenth Psalm, as well as an indication that there were some who did not live up to their vows—a situation not limited to ancient days:

O Lord, who shall sojourn in thy tent?
 Who shall dwell on thy holy hill?
 He who walks blamelessly, and does what is right,
 and speaks the truth from his heart;
 who swears to his own hurt and does not change.
 He who does these things shall never be moved.
 (Psa.15:1,4c, 5c)

2. Foundation Sacrifices

If human sacrifices at the founding of cities or the building of temples or palaces were recognized in Israel at any time, it must have been an echo of some old tribal laws. Such human sacrifices were among the pagan rites. The only instance connected in any way with Israel was the curse pronounced by Joshua on Jericho:

Joshua laid an oath upon them at that time, saying,
 "Cursed before the Lord be the man that rises up and
 rebuilds Jericho.

At the cost of his first-born shall he lay its
 foundation,
 And at the cost of his youngest son shall he
 set up its gates. (Joshua 6:26)

Hiel of Bethel built Jericho; he laid its foundations
 at the cost of Abiram his first-born, and set up its
 gates at the cost of his youngest son Segub, according
 to the word of the Lord, which he spoke by Joshua, the
 son of Nun. (I Kings 16:34)

There is no record of any such foundation burials in Israel, but the bones of a number of them have been excavated from Canaanite cities. At Mari, however, archaeologists have found figurines in foundation deposits, which may be analogous to the change of using figurines for slaves in burials. There were also tablets of stone and silver, somewhat like modern customs.¹

1. Parrot, Discovering Buried Worlds, p. 30.

3. Sacrifices to Insure Victory in War

Reports of sacrifices to insure victory in arms come from all portions of the globe. None are recorded in Israel, yet the effect on Israel of the Moabite sacrifice of King Mesha's son was so great that they withdrew from their campaign against that country:

When the king of Moab saw that the battle was going against him, he took with him seven hundred swordsmen to break through opposite the king of Edom; but they could not. Then he took his eldest son who was to reign in his stead, and offered him for a burnt offering upon the wall. And there came great wrath upon Israel; and they withdrew from him and returned to their own land.

(II Kings 3:26,27)

4. Fertility Sacrifices

The most frequent and continuous of all the sacrifices other than the regular ones at the shrines were those to insure good crops: for fertility of the soil, for the abundance of rain, for clear weather during harvest. These were of many different types, and at first probably only in seasons of extreme drought or other difficulty were they human sacrifices. However, these grew in number and intensity through the years.

a. Human Sacrifices in Israel. King Solomon was responsible for the official introduction into Israel of the worship of foreign gods who demanded human sacrifice. His marriages with many foreign wives who were devotees of these pagan gods made imperative, perhaps, the building of shrines for their worship, but it endangered the nation (I Kings 11:1-3):

When Solomon was old his wives turned away his heart after other gods. . . . For Solomon went after Ashtoreth the goddess of the Sidonians, and after Milcom the abomination of the Ammonites. . . . Then Solomon built a high place for Chemosh the abomination of Moab, and for Molech the abomination of the Ammonites, on the mountain east of Jerusalem. And so he did for all his foreign wives, who burned incense and sacrificed to their gods.

(I Kings 11:4-8)

In spite of priest and prophet, these practices increased throughout the years. Ahaz personally led the people in the sacrifices and devotions to these foreign gods:

Ahaz . . . walked in the way of the kings of Israel. He even burned his son as an offering, according to the abominable practices of the nations whom the Lord drove out before the people of Israel. And he sacrificed and burned incense on the high places, and on the hills, and under every green tree. (II Kings 16:2,3)

Manasseh not only encouraged human sacrifices, but he also burned his own son as an offering, and increased these horrid practices to such an extent that he "shed very much innocent blood, till he had filled Jerusalem from one end to the other"(II Kings 21:16). Part of the reformation work of King Josiah was getting rid of these practices, which he may have done under the inspiration of Jeremiah's preaching (Jer.7:30-34). He made a very thorough job of destroying all the altars to these false gods which had been erected throughout the length and breadth of the land; "and he defiled Topheth, which is in the valley of the sons of Hinnom, that no one might burn his son or his daughter as an offering to Molech"(II Kings 23:10). But his work was not permanent, and it was a long time before the custom died out. Even in the days of Deutero-Isaiah the prophet was still preaching against it:

Are you not children of transgression,
the offspring of deceit,
you who burn with lust among the oaks,
under every green tree;
who slay your children in the valleys,
under the clefts of the rocks?
(Isa.57:4,5)

One wonders what was behind all this human sacrifice! Perhaps they thought that those so sacrificed would have some very special consideration in the next world, taking place among the blessed ones in the train of the god. Or they may have expected some special consideration themselves for making such an offering. It was a strange and horrible worship, yet it did show a frantic devotion to the god. It was found in all parts of the world, in places where there had been no apparent connection or opportunity for the

spread of influence. It must have been a part of human nature to feel that the very best must be given to the god; or that the most precious thing was demanded by the god in return for favors, or to ward off disasters. To that extent it may have been worthy; it was the method of making the gift to the god that was at fault.

b. Phoenicia. Of all the human sacrifices, that of little children was most tragic. This seems to have been a specialty of Canaanite religion, and of the worship of the god Melqarth, or Melek, in Phoenicia, spoken of in the Old Testament as Moloch, or Molech. This worship was not limited to Phoenicia, but was extended to all her colonies. In Carthage, a Phoenician colony in North Africa, archaeologists have unearthed the ruins of a temple of the goddess Tanit, where human sacrifices were offered. Literally hundreds of urns were found containing bones of children, from four to twelve years old. The urns were about twelve inches high, of red or white terra cotta, with a wide mouth sealed with yellow clay. The name of the child was on a stele, placed immediately above the urn. That such care was taken with the burial shows that something very special was to be expected from the sacrifice. In the temple was the image of the goddess which made clear the method of sacrifice. She had the head of a bull, with a triangle and crescent moon between her horns. Many offerings were at her feet, all reading, "To the divinity Tanit, face of Baal, and to the Lord Baal Amon." In front of her was a fire pit. Her arms outstretched were raised by pulleys. The child was evidently laid in her arms by those making the offering. Then the arms could be dropped, letting the child fall into the blazing fire.¹ What must have been their idea of a god who would demand such sacrifices!

c. America. Far away in ancient America there are found signs of human sacrifice. The Mayas are considered the "Greeks of the New World," the most highly cultured of all the ancient people of the Western Hemisphere. More than a thousand years before Christ, they had a well-developed astronomy with

1. Count Byron Khun de Prorok, "Ancient Carthage in the Light of Modern Excavation," Nat. Geog. Mag., 45(1924), 406-412.

an accurate calendar, though probably they used it for astrological purposes.¹ Yet they worshiped a serpent god, sacrificing their most beautiful maidens, an annual ritual preceded by a procession of priests in gorgeous robes. "The spectacular sacrifice itself--a dramatic hurling through the air into the dark silent water below--combined to affect powerfully the aboriginal mind."² At times of drought or other national crises, special sacrifices were ordered. The girls were flung into the pit to intercede with the gods for the tribe.³

e. World-Wide Sacrifices. In ancient times, and on down through the ages to modern times there have been human sacrifices in all parts of the world, by various means. Some were put to death in the ceremony of re-enacting the deeds of mythological heroes. Thus, for Attis, the dying god of vegetation, his representative died during the rites, but unfortunately he could not re-enact the next act in the myth by being restored to life again. In later years the ceremony was changed so that all the male followers could take part in it by simply stabbing themselves and letting their blood flow, instead of dying. In Scandinavia, the human victims were put to death by hanging, or by a combination of hanging and strangling, acting out the Odin myth. In Greece, the goddess Artemis was hanged in effigy, though earlier there may have been an actual victim.⁴ There was also the human scapegoat, to bear the sins of the people and avert disaster, plague, or other result of the anger of the god:

The Athenians regularly maintained a number of degraded and useless beings at public expense; and when any calamity such as plague, drought, or famine befell the city, they sacrificed two of these outcast scapegoats. One of the victims was sacrificed for the men and the other for the women. . . . They were led about the city and then sacrificed apparently by being stoned to death outside the city.

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1. Sylvanus Griswold Morley, "Unearthing America's Ancient History," Nat. Geog. Mag., 60(1931), 108.
 2. Morley, ibid.
 3. Herget Paintings, "Life in Maya Land," Nat. Geog. Mag., 70(1936), 623.
 4. Sir James George Frazer, The Golden Bough (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1942), pp. 352, 353, 355, 356.
 5. Frazer, ibid., p. 479.

That these were social outcasts and not the choice citizens was no doubt better for the ongoing generations, but it is a far cry from the ideal of giving the best to the gods. Perhaps this might be considered an acceptable means of substitution, just as figurines could be substituted for human beings in grave and foundation deposits.¹

J. Importance of Burial

In whatever manner a person died, his burial was very important. This is inferred by the care taken in the burial of the bodies all over the world, for from time immemorial this is evident. The need is outstandingly reflected in some of the ancient literature.

1. Greece

Homer's Iliad, which was written during this period, but no doubt reflects earlier ideas, gives illustration of the vital necessity for burial. Before the gates of Troy, battle raged about the body of the slain Patroclus. The Trojans determined to dishonor it, and to prevent the Greeks from giving it proper burial rites; the Greeks determined to rescue it for needed burial. Thus Hector, having killed Patroclus, gloats, "Thy flesh shall glut the carrion birds of Troy."² And Atrides challenges his fellow Greeks, "Deem it shame Patroclus' corpse should glut the dogs of Troy."³ So Trojans and Greeks fought over the body, dragging it back and forth until finally the Greeks were successful. But the battle raged the more. Achilles killed Lycaon and rolled his body in the river with this taunt, "On thee, extended on thy bier, shall rise no mother's wail."⁴ Still unsatisfied and wanting more revenge, he killed the Trojan Hector, fastened his body to his chariot wheels, and dragged it around the walls of Troy in sight of the Trojans, gloating over his victory.⁶

1. Parrot, Discovering Buried Worlds, pp. 30, 31.

2-6. Homer, Iliad, trans., Edward, Earl of Derby, Everyman's Library (London: J. M. Dent & Sons, Ltd., 1914):

2. Bk. XVI, ln. 962, p. 293.

3. Bk. XVII, ls. 283, 284, p. 301. 4. Bk. XXI, ls. 137, 138, p. 362.

5. Bk. XXII, ls. 467-475, p. 307.

So eager was Achilles for revenge that he had left the rescued body of Patroclus to lie unburied. In his sleep the ghost of Patroclus visits him:

Sleep'st thou, Achilles, mindless of thy friend,
Neglecting not the living but the dead?
Hasten my funeral rites, that I may pass
Through Hades' gloomy gate; ere those be done,
The spirits and spectres of departed men
Drive us far from them, nor allow to pass
The abhorred river; but forlorn and sad
I wander through the wide-spread realms of night.¹

Achilles was overjoyed to see his friend, and promised to attend to the rites at once. He attempted to embrace him:

Thus as he awoke he spread his longing arms,
But nought he clasped; and with a wailing cry,
Vanished, like smoke, the spirit beneath the earth.
Up sprang Achilles, all amaz'd, and smote
His hands together, and lamenting cried:
"O Heav'n, there are then, in the realms below,
Spirits and spectres, unsubstantial all;
For through the night Patroclus' shade hath stood
Weeping and wailing at my side, and told
His bidding; th' image of himself it seemed."²

A funeral pyre was built next day, and Patroclus given fitting rites, which included covering his body with hair that they all shaved from their heads. With him they sacrificed sheep and oxen, horses and dogs, and twelve men.³

Though the body of Hector was dragged through the dust daily for many days, the gods protected it, and no sign of injury was visible, "nor hath corruption touch'd his flesh, nor worms that wont to prey on men in battle slain."⁴ That was a comfort to old Priam:

"See, my son, how good it is
To give th' immortal Gods their tribute due;
For never did my son while yet he liv'd
Neglect the Gods who on Olympus dwell;
And thence have they remember'd him in death."⁵

1-5: Homer, *Iliad*, *op. cit.* 1. Bk. XXIII, ls. 81-89, p. 393.

2. Bk. XXIII, ls. 117-126, pp. 393, 394.

3. Bk. XXIII, pp. 394-397.

4. Bk. XXIV, ls. 481, 482, p. 427.

5. Bk. XXIV, ls. 492-496, p. 427.

The Books of the Iliad close with the burning funeral pyre of Hector:

While yet the rosy-fingered morn was young,
 Round noble Hector's pyre the people press'd;
 When all were gather'd round, and closely throng'd,
 First on the burning mass, as far as spread
 The range of fire, they pour'd the ruddy wine,
 And quenched the flames; his brethren then and friends,
 Weeping, the hot tears flowing down their cheeks,
 Collected from the pile the whitened bones;
 These in a golden casket they enclos'd
 And o'er it spread soft shawls of purple dye;
 And in a grave they laid it, and in haste
 With stone in pond'rous masses cover'd o'er;
 And rais'd a mound, and watch'd on every side,
 From sudden inroads of the Greeks to guard.
 And mound erected, back they turn'd; and all
 Assembled duly, shar'd the solemn feast. . . .¹
 Such were the rites to glorious Hector paid.

2. India

To lie unburied constituted the greatest misfortune in India also, and the Vedic Hymns speak of souls, left unburied, "consumed with gnawing hunger." Here, not only were funeral rites essential, but continued offerings for the dead must be made, for the good dead return to share the feast with the living. Therefore it was important to have a son to perform the proper ceremonies.² The Yama, the God of the Dead, is the Child of the Sun, the Avenger of Sin. The believing dead congregate in his house and feast with him, but each must bring his own food, and this must be provided by the sons on earth. Otherwise, they will watch the others eat, but have nothing for themselves, and die of hunger. They are clothed in a glorious body, and they sit by sparkling waters in a beautiful land. But the unbelievers sit by a pool of blood, in darkness and dread, and lacking anything to eat, they chew their hair!³ Hymns sung by the worshipers are also effective for the dead, who can hear them, and for whom the god is implored:

1. Homer, Iliad, op. cit., Bk. XXIV, ls. 919-936, pp. 437, 438.

2. Bendann, Death Customs, pp. 164.

3. Bendann, ibid., p. 45.

Whatever law of thine, O God, O Varuna, as we are men,
Day after day we violate,

Give us not as a prey to death to be destroyed by thee
in wrath,
To thy fierce anger when displeased.

To gain thy mercy, O Varuna, with hymns we bind thy
heart, as binds
The charioteer his tethered horse.¹

Thus in all parts of the world there was from early days a recognition of life going on after the days on earth are past, though just what type of life this was is not yet clear. There was some continued connection with the life on earth, even though the spirit had gone on. Remembrance on earth and honor given to the graves had a certain amount of influence on the life in the world beyond. Possibly this was thought of as similar to the worship of the gods having a bearing on one's daily life. In spite of many crudities, the people saw life as unending, which gave to it a certain majesty and glory, and they had something to pass on to coming generations that proved to be of inestimable value.

Nocol Macnicol, ed., "Hymns from the Rig Veda," Hindu Scriptures,
Everyman's Library, p. 4.

CHAPTER IX
THE OLD TESTAMENT

A. Records of Earlier Culture

Many of the Old Testament passages have already been considered, but they had to do with forms and ceremonies, and with the deteriorating influence of foreign practices. It is necessary to examine the beliefs of Israel as handed down through the pages of the Old Testament, regarding spiritual things: their contact with a world beyond the sight of mortal eyes, their conception of God, of life on earth under His watchful care, and of life after death in His presence.

The opening chapters of Genesis were written millennia after the events, and any early ideas had passed through the refining fires of their later experiences, but there are reflections there of early thought. Israel shared with the nations around her the belief in God who created the whole universe. Perhaps this was a thought shared by all humanity, for:

The heavens declare the glory of God;
and the firmament proclaims his handiwork.
Day to day pours forth speech,
and night to night declares knowledge.
There is no speech, nor are there words;
and their voice is not heard;
yet their voice goes out through all the earth,
and their words to the end of the world.
(Psa.19:1-4)

1. The Documents Back of the Old Testament

Israel had a revelation of God, the records of which are found in the Old Testament. This is a compilation of many documents, which have gone through several revisions before receiving final form. They were themselves based on earlier records, and on oral traditions handed down from long-past ages and coming from different sections of the country. Scholars recognize many documents, but a few are outstanding and should be noted.

a. The J-Document. One of the most important documents is known as the J-Document because the name used for God is Jahweh (Jehovah). According to scholarship, the author was a Judaeen with firm assurance in the glorious destiny of his people, who probably lived during a time when Judah was at the height of her power, as during the reign of Solomon or of Jehoshaphat.¹

Great literature consists of great thoughts clothed in matchless form. The epic scope of J's subject--the birth and triumph of a nation under the aegis of its god--corresponds to the superb literary form. J's style, like that of the Iliad, combines nobility with simplicity--a paradoxical combination that is extremely rare.²

b. The E-Document. The E-Document is also given its title from the name used for God: Elohim. The interest in ritual shown in this document suggests that its author was a priest, and probably from the tribe of Ephraim, living in the days of the greatest power of the Northern Kingdom, Israel, and probably during the reign of Jeroboam II.³ His language is classical Hebrew at its best, but lacks the epic scope of the J-Document.⁴

c. The D-Document. The Book of Deuteronomy makes up the D-Document chiefly, thought to have been written by a priest in Jerusalem during the days of Manasseh, who was deeply impressed by the prophetic teaching.⁵ The book has gone through several redactions and did not receive its final form until about 400 B.C.⁶ The story of the "finding" of the first draft of the book is recorded at length:

And Hilkiah the high priest said to Shaphan the secretary, "I have found the book of the law in the house of the Lord." And Hilkiah gave the book to Shaphan, and he read it. . . . And Shaphan read it before the king.

And when the king heard the words of the book of the law, he rent his clothes. (II Kings 22:8-11)

1. Robert H. Pfeiffer, Introduction to the Old Testament, p. 147.

2. Ibid., p. 156.

3. Ibid., pp. 172, 173.

4. Ibid., p. 176.

5. Ibid., pp. 179, 180.

6. Ibid., p. 182.

The words of this book made a great impression upon both king and people and were no doubt responsible for much of Josiah's reform movement:

Then the king sent, and all the elders of Judah and Jerusalem were gathered to him. And the king went up to the house of the Lord, and with him all the . . . people . . . and he read in their hearing all the words of the book of the covenant which had been found in the house of the Lord. And the king stood by the pillar and made a covenant before the Lord, to walk after the Lord and to keep his commandments and his testimonies and his statutes, with all his heart and with all his soul, to perform the words of this covenant that were written in this book; and all the people joined in the covenant. (II Kings 23:1-3)

d. The Priestly Code. The Priestly Code is considered by scholars to be a Fifth Century "Midrash," or Commentary on the embryonic Pentateuch.¹ The authors are considered to have been priests and lawyers who were deeply religious, but also scholars, "the most erudite writers of the Old Testament." They searched through ancient written documents, and made a codification of ritual laws, based on earlier codes, and a series of narratives, of which the sources are lost.²

2. Myths and Legends

Back of the written documents were many folk tales handed down orally, a custom of all primitive people. There are certain conceptions that belong outstandingly to this oral background.

a. Anthropomorphic Conception of God. It was natural that in the early years the idea of God should be anthropomorphic.

The only personality that we know anything directly about is human personality. To speak, then, of God as a Person is to think of him under the human form. But such a conception of God is unavoidable if we are to retain a conception of God that is of any religious value.³

1. Pfeiffer, op. cit., p. 188.

2. Ibid., p. 203.

3. Albert C. Knudson, The Religious Teaching of the Old Testament (New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1918), p. 58.

To the glory of Israel, their thought of God was not less than that! They did not use bulls and cats and crocodiles to represent God. When, later, they set up bulls at Dan and at Bethel, it was to the horror of the true worshiper of God, and the baleful consequences are recounted:

So the king (Jeroboam) took counsel and made two calves of gold. And he said to the people, "You have gone up to Jerusalem long enough. Behold your gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt." And he set one in Bethel, and the other he put in Dan. And this thing became a sin, for the people went to the one at Bethel and to the other as far as Dan. (I Kings 12:28-30)

He (Baasha) did what was evil in the sight of the Lord, and walked in the way of Jeroboam and in his sin which he made Israel to sin. (I Kings 15:34)

Thus Jehu wiped out Baal from Israel. But Jehu did not turn aside from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, which he made Israel to sin, the golden calves that were in Bethel, and in Dan. (II Kings 20:28,29)

That God made man "in his own image" was probably taken literally at first, so much so that they thought of God as talking with man, and "walking in the garden in the cool of the day" (Gen.3:8). By their sin Adam and Eve broke the beautiful communion with God. The rest of man's life on earth as given in the Old Testament is the story of the attempt on the part of both God and man to renew that contact.

b. Entrance of Sin into the World. With the entrance of sin into the world came death—certainly a spiritual death, but an immediate consequence was physical death—a murder! (Gen.4:8) Dr. Kuechenmeister studies this at length, and speculates upon the result, whether Cain tried to hide Abel from sight, and if so, what kind of burial.¹ The important fact is that the Lord knew what had happened. A very old folktale is reflected in the words with which it is expressed: "The voice of your brother's blood is crying to me from the ground" (Gen.4:10).

1. Frederick Heinrich Kuechenmeister, Die Todtenbestattungen der Bibel und die Feuerbestattung (Stuttgart, Germany: Schweizerbart, 1893), p. 12.

Cain received punishment:

And now you are cursed from the ground, which has opened its mouth to receive your brother's blood from your hand. When you till the ground, it shall no longer yield to you its strength; you shall be a fugitive and a wanderer on the earth. (Gen.4:11,12)

Some think that this is an indication that the people were worshiping the Earth Mother, who received Abel's blood into the ground and took up the cause of the dead. Others consider that it was the spirit of the dead from the soil that was taking vengeance for his murder, that his spirit had entered the soil in the form of blood, and henceforth denied to the murderer the fruits of the earth.¹ Both of these speculations are based on primitive ideas held by backward tribes today. The psychologist would have another suggestion: since Cain was a tiller of the soil, and Abel a shepherd, and since their quarrel had been about their respective sacrifices, Cain's conscience would prick him at any thought of the earth's produce. Certainly he was overcome with the horror of his deed--too late!

Behold, thou hast driven me this day away from the ground; and from thy face I shall be hidden; and I shall be a fugitive and a wanderer on the earth, and whoever finds me will slay me. (Gen.4:13,14)

The punishment for all humanity was far worse than Cain's personal punishment, for the worst punishment for wrongdoing is the tendency to continue it. A spirit of vengeance became apparent in the world, on down to succeeding generations:

Lamech said to his wives:

"Adah and Zillah, hear my voice;
you wives of Lamech, hearken to what I say:
I have slain a man for wounding me,
a young man for striking me.
If Cain is avenged sevenfold,
truly Lamech is seventy-sevenfold. (Gen.4:23,24)

1. Adolphe Lods, Israel from its Beginnings to the Middle of the Eighth Century trans., S. H. Hooke (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1932), p. 226.

c. "Spirits"—Good and Bad. When the word "spirit" is used today it frequently means nothing more than the character or temper of a person, but its early use was more literal. It was with spirits of all kinds that men had to deal. The mystery of life around them was interpreted best to their understanding as the impact of a spirit world, with spirits both good and bad. Sometimes they seem to use the spirits as an excuse for their evil deeds—it was because a spirit entered into them. This is a very primitive idea, but it lingered on through the centuries, and has not entirely died out even yet. Good spirits had their good influences also, and were responsible for the good things of earth.

The sky hung low in the ancient world. Supernatural beings thronged the earth, crowding uncomfortably into the society of mortals. . . . The angels traversed the intervening space with utmost ease and in a brief period of time. . . . According to the Jewish way of thought superhuman care surrounded one from the moment of birth to the hour of death and continued beyond the grave.

Not all who were called angels were good! According to a very old tradition, it was the guardian angels who were set to watch over the affairs of men who became enamored of some of the women they were supposed to guard, and thus brought about their downfall and trouble for the human race. The brief story in the opening verses of the sixth chapter of Genesis is but a reflection of folk tales that are found in many languages: the silver age of the giants replacing the golden age of purity.² But there were evil spirits in the world before then; in fact, the first spirit met with in the Bible is an evil one! Father Heidt says that it is impossible to tell when angelic existence began, or when the angels first came to earth, but that when Eve was tempted in the Garden of Eden there was certainly an evil spirit in the world!³

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1. Shirley Jackson Case, Experience with the Supernatural in Early Christian Times (New York: The Century Company, 1929), pp. 3, 11.
 2. See Hesiod, "The Five Ages" from Works and Days, trans., Jack Lindsay, The Oxford Book of Greek Verse in Translation (Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1944), pp. 136-138.
 3. William George Heidt, Angelology in the Old Testament (Washington: The Catholic University of America Press, 1949), p. 23.

The story of the snake in the Garden of Eden is part of ancient folk lore in many lands. Among old seals dug up in excavations of nearly all the ancient civilizations, many show a scene representing this old story: a tree with a man and a woman on either side, and a serpent either coiled or in the branches of the tree. One seal shows the serpent with seven heads. One of the symbols of Egyptian royalty was the uraeus, the papyrus-colored serpent. The serpent seems to have been an object of worship in many lands. The most elaborate object found at Dhiban in Moab during the 1955 excavation was a three-storied incense burner, with two snakes crawling in and out the "windows". Similar ones are on display at most of the museums of antiquities of many lands. The serpent gained the reputation for its wisdom, but that wisdom was of the wrong kind in Eden. The serpent was not worshiped in Israel. There is one instance of its use as sympathetic magic, when Moses "made a bronze serpent and set it on a pole" (Numbers 21:9) in the wilderness. This later was the object of such superstitious veneration that Hezekiah "broke the bronze serpent in pieces" (II Kings 18:4). But God cursed the serpent, and God's power was over all (Gen.3:14,15). Nevertheless, there was a fear of demons, and even the need to guard against intercourse with them. The legislation against this practice was not codified until much later, but before Saul consulted the Witch of Endor, contact with familiar spirits was recognized as an evil that should be stamped out (I.Sam.28:10). Part of King Josiah's sweeping reform years later had to do with that subject (II Kings 23:24).

B. Israel's Early Records of Death

The Israelites were not "obsessed with death" as were many of the other contemporary nations. The Egyptians seemed to give far more attention to the preparations for the next world than to life in this one. Many of the Mesopotamian epics had to do with a future life. The Biblical records are very casual about death: they died, and that was all. But Enoch was different:

Enoch walked with God. . . . Thus all the days of Enoch were three hundred and sixty-five years. Enoch walked with God; and he was not, for God took him.

(Gen.5:22-24)

Just what that meant to people of that ancient day it is impossible to say.

In Hebrews, it is interpreted as being taken bodily into heaven:

By faith Enoch was taken up so that he should not see death; and he was not found, because God had taken him. Now before he was taken he was attested as having pleased God. And without faith it is impossible to please him. (Heb.11:5,6)

Even that statement about Enoch is made very briefly. The people of Israel seem to have been too busy with the things of earth to speculate about heaven. The impression is given that they were very sure of God, and so had no need to worry about the future. Their task was on earth.

C. God's Covenant Relations with Man

God was very near to the people of Israel. He spoke to Noah, for Noah also "walked with God." He was a "righteous man, blameless in his generations" (Gen.6:9), which meant a great deal, for those days were evil. This is a very old legend, out of the ancient past, for it moves with a stately rhythm that can be classed as poetry,¹ such as could be sung by the minstrels, or by a group about a campfire. After the flood, God made a covenant with Noah, and through him with all the people of earth:

While the earth remains, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night shall not cease. (Gen.8:22)

1. Covenant Signs to Individuals

a. The Sign to Noah. When God made the covenant with Noah, he gave him a sign, which would continue to be a sign for all men everywhere:

This is the sign of the covenant which I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you for all future generations: I set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and the earth. When I bring clouds over the earth and the bow is seen in the clouds, I will remember my covenant. (Gen.9:12-15)

1. Pfeiffer, op. cit., p. 273.

It must have given the prophet Ezekiel a special joy to see that rainbow in his vision of heaven:

There was the likeness of a throne. . . . Like the appearance of the bow that is in the cloud on the day of rain, so was the appearance of the brightness round about.
(Ezek.1:26,28)

Ezekiel would know that God could see the rainbow continually, and always remember his covenant. No doubt it would remind him of all the subsequent covenants made with men, for as they were able to understand, God increased his covenant relations.

b. Several Signs to Abraham. God made himself known to Abraham in a number of different ways. The stories have come down through several lines, and are colored by the thought of the later writers, but they reflect very ancient legends. How the first message came is unknown, but it was sufficiently clear to start Abram off on a long journey to a new land:

Go out from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. I will bless them that bless you, and him who curses you I will curse; and by you all the families of the earth will bless themselves.
(Gen.12:1-3)

At another time he was told to count the stars in order to estimate the number of his descendants (Gen.15:5), and later, after the sacrifice on Mount Moriah, they would be "as the stars of heaven and as the sand which is on the seashore" (Gen.22:16-18).

In contrast to these intimate, personal, anthropomorphic conceptions of God, there is the report of Abraham's vision of the awful majesty of God: a "dread and great darkness fell upon him" (Gen.15:13-21). This was followed by "a smoking fire-pot and a flaming torch," strange and mystic symbols that made more memorable the message that came with them, which had to do with the extent of the land which Abraham's descendants would possess. All these promises came before Abraham had a child of his own!

There came a day when Abraham entertained "three men" and apparently there was no distinction until two went on to Sodom, and the Lord remained to talk with Abraham, and Abraham argued with him as he might have with another man (Gen.18:1-33). Abraham was remembered as the "friend" of God (II Chron.20:7; Isa.40:8; James 2:23).

c. The Sign to Jacob. God renewed his covenant regarding their descendants to both Isaac and Jacob. The first renewal to Jacob had a very beautiful setting:

He dreamed that there was a ladder set up on earth, and the top of it reached to heaven; and behold, the angels of God were ascending and descending on it! And behold, the Lord stood above it and said, "I am the Lord, the God of Abraham your father and the God of Isaac. . . . Behold, I am with you and will keep you wherever you go, and will bring you back to this land; for I will not leave you until I have done that of which I have spoken to you.

(Gen.28:12-15)

The covenant with Jacob was renewed several times, particularly on that most mysterious occasion when his name was changed to Israel, "for you have striven with God and with men, and have prevailed" (Gen.33:28).

Many years passed before the covenant was again renewed, and it may be that it became more a tradition than a reality. Joseph was sold to the Midianites, who took him to Egypt (Gen.38:26-36). There he felt the guidance of God, who gave him the type of wisdom needed at the court of Pharaoh. Jacob and all his family followed, and they remained in Egypt about four hundred years, yet they never forgot their traditional background, which prepared them for that great covenant on Sinai when they became definitely and for all time the "people of God." God had been very near, watching over them, preparing them for the life they were later to live. Joseph could forgive his brothers, for they were part of God's plan:

Do not be distressed or angry with yourselves, because you sold me here; for God sent me before you to preserve life.

As for you, you meant evil against me; but God meant it for good. (Gen.45:5; 50:20)

d. Moses: Many Personal Contacts. It was in Midian that Moses had his first contact with God, when he received his call to return to Egypt and lead his people out of bondage:

And the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush; and he looked, and lo, the bush was burning, yet it was not consumed. . . . And (God) said, "Do not come near; put off your shoes from your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground."
(Ex.3:2-5)

Moses had many personal contacts with God after that, so many that it was said of him that he spoke with God "face to face, as a man speaks to his friend" (Ex.33:11). He spent long periods up on the mountain with God, and received the Decalog "written with the finger of God" (Ex.31:18), which, in the old folk tales, must have been given a literal meaning. When he came down from that mountain-top experience, his face shone so that the people were afraid of him, and he had to put on a veil (Ex.34:29-35). Yet even with Moses, there was an aspect of God that was majestic and awe-inspiring, though recorded in anthropological terms which must reflect a very old legend:

And Moses said, "I pray thee, show me thy glory." And he said, "I will make all my goodness pass before you, and I will before you proclaim my name, "The Lord"; and I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy. But," he said, "you cannot see my face; for man shall not see me and live." And the Lord said, "Behold, there is a place by me where you shall stand upon the rock; and while my glory passes by I will put you in a cleft of the rock, and I will cover you with my hand until I have passed by; and then I will take away my hand, and you shall see my back; but my face shall not be seen."
(Ex.33:18-23)

Actually Moses was more than a prophet. He was God's spokesman, but he was also the charismatic leader of Israel in all her doings. Hence he combined in himself all offices of Israel, prophet, priest, ruler, and judge. Yet the most important of all was his role as interpreter of the will and purpose of God. In this sense he was Israel's greatest figure.¹

1. G. Ernest Wright, "Exegesis: Deuteronomy," Interpreter's Bible, II, 537.

2. Covenant Signs to the People of Israel

The power of God was manifest from the first in leading Israel out of Egypt, through the instrumentality of Moses. But there were also times when the actual presence of God was demonstrated.

a. The Cloud and Fire. Moses was the leader of the people, and with his rod in his hand was able to do miracles, but the sign of the actual presence of God was constantly before the people:

And the Lord went before them by day in a pillar of cloud to lead them along the way, and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light, that they might travel by day and by night; the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night did not depart from before the people. (Ex.13:21,22)

When the Egyptians were pursuing after them, as they neared the Red Sea, there was further protection from on High:

The angel of God who went before the host of Israel moved and went behind them; and the pillar of cloud moved from before them and stood behind them, coming between the host of Egypt and the host of Israel. And there was the cloud and the darkness; and the night passed without one coming near the other all night. (Ex.14:19,20)

Later, in their long journeyings, the cloud was their guide, staying still before them when they were in camp, and moving on ahead of them when they were on the march (Num.9:15-23).

b. The Thunders of Sinai. On the day of the Great Covenant, God gave a special demonstration of his majesty and power, different from the cloud:

On the morning of the third day there were thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the mountain, and a very loud trumpet blast, so that all the people who were in the camp trembled. . . . And Mount Sinai was wrapped in smoke, because the Lord descended upon it in fire; and the smoke of it went up like the smoke of a kiln, and the whole mountain quaked greatly. And as the sound of the trumpet grew louder and louder, Moses spoke, and God answered him in thunder. And the Lord came down on Mount Sinai to the top of the mountain. (Ex.19:9,16-20)

God's message at that time was outstandingly: "I am the Lord your God," though there were the commandments to follow (Ex.20:1-17). The people were terrified and asked that God would not speak to them again, but that Moses would be the interpreter for them.

c. The Sanctuary. While God was high over all and far away, He was also near, not only in the demonstrations in the upper air, but he wanted to have a dwelling in the midst of the people, that they might know that He was near:

The Lord said to Moses, "Speak to the people of Israel, that they take for me an offering; from every man whose heart makes him willing you shall receive the offering for me. . . . And let them make me a sanctuary, that I may dwell in their midst." (Ex.25:1,2,8)

When that sanctuary was completed, the Lord made that the sign of his presence among them:

Then the cloud covered the tent of meeting, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle. And Moses was not able to enter the tent of meeting, because the cloud abode upon it, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle. (Ex.40:34,35)

When, years later, Solomon and the priests and people dedicated the beautiful new Temple in Jerusalem, there was a similar experience:

When the priests came out of the holy place, a cloud filled the house of the Lord, so that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud; for the glory of the Lord filled the house of the Lord. (I Kings 8:10,11)

Even so, they never forgot that God's throne was in the heavens:

"But will God indeed dwell on the earth? Behold, heaven and the highest heaven cannot contain thee; how much less this house which I have built! Yet have regard to the prayer of thy servant and to his supplication, O Lord, my God, . . . and of thy people Israel, when they pray toward this place; yea, hear thou in heaven thy dwelling place; and when thou hearest, forgive." (I Kings 8:27,28,30)

D. The Character of God

God was known to the people of Israel by many different names: the everlasting God (Gen.21:33); God Almighty (Gen.20:3); the Lord of hosts, or the Lord God of hosts (I Sam.1:11); God of gods and Lord of lords (Deut.10:17); I AM THAT I AM (Ex.3:14); the eternal God (Deut.33:27). But the nearest and dearest is more than a name; it is an expression of the feeling of the people: "My God" (Deut. 4:5), or "our God" (Deut.1:6), and its counterpart, "thy people" (Ex.5:23).

1. The God of Battles

Israel had a great deal of fighting to do to win a place for themselves in Palestine, so it is natural that they would think of God as the God of battles. Many times they felt the presence of the Lord as they fought.

Lift up your heads, O gates!
and be lifted up, O ancient doors!
that the King of glory may come in.
Who is the King of glory?
the Lord, strong and mighty,
the Lord, mighty in battle!

(Psa.24:7,8)

2. The God of Peace

But there came a time when their conquests were over for a while at least, and their ideal was peace. And the ideal was always God.

He makes wars to cease to the end of the earth;
he breaks the bow, and shatters the spear,
he burns the chariots with fire. (Psa.46:9)

Elijah learned that lesson in Horeb:

And behold, the Lord passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and broke in pieces the rocks before the Lord, but the Lord was not in the wind; and after the wind an earthquake, but the Lord was not in the earthquake; and after the earthquake a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire; and after the fire a still, small voice.

(I Kings 19:11,12)

3. The God of Love and Mercy

Perhaps it was only later that the people came to appreciate the love of God, and count their first commandment, "Thou shalt love the Lord" (Deut.6:5); but there must have been some understanding of that aspect of God because of his guardianship of them throughout their long history, and particularly in the time of wilderness experience, so often recounted in the Psalms.

Whoever is wise, let him give heed to these things;
Let men consider the steadfast love of the Lord.
(Psa.107:45)

O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good,
for his steadfast love endures forever.
O give thanks to the God of gods,
for his steadfast love endures forever.
O give thanks to the Lord of lords,
for his steadfast love endures for ever.
(Psa.136:1-3)

E. Angels in the Old Testament

God did not always speak directly to the people. Sometimes he sent his angels, who appeared among them as men. Abraham's visitors were angels who went on to Sodom and arranged for Lot's escape from the destruction of that city (Gen.18:1,2; 19:1-23). A "man" stood before Joshua in battle armor with drawn sword in hand, "as commander of the army of the Lord" (Josh.5:13-15). Gideon did not recognize his caller as an angel until he "reached out the tip of the staff that was in his hand . . . and there sprang up fire from the rock (Judges 6:11-24). Then Gideon thought he would die because he had seen the Lord--but it was only his angel, and Gideon was safe! Manoah, the father of Samson, had a similar experience (Judges 13:3-23). The angel who appeared to Hagar is not described, but on two occasions he watched over her and helped her to care for Ishmael (Gen.16:7-13; 21:16-18). It was the "angel of the Lord" who called to Abraham from heaven and halted the sacrifice of Isaac (Gen.22:11). An angel ministered to Elijah's needs in the wilderness on the way to Horeb (I Kings 19:5-8). Elisha saw a whole host of the angelic train guarding the city of Dothan, and when he prayed, the servant saw them also (II Kings 6:15-18). There must have been other unwritten occasions.

There were times when angels had a part in the call of the prophets. Isaiah had a wonderful vision of the Lord in the Temple, which included an angel train, and the angel took the coal from the altar to cleanse his lips (Isa.6:1-8). Ezekiel's vision was a glorious one, with angels of many different kinds, repeated several times (Ezek.1:4-28;3:12-14;8:2-18). Other prophets were definitely called, but the personal details are not given. The Lord spoke to them and gave them the messages which they delivered; the Lord gave Jeremiah some visions, which had to do with the work to which he was called, and not with the presence of God. The Lord was watching over his people, and although they often failed him, they recognized it. His presence was not always a pleasant experience--sometimes he came in punishment, which they justly deserved:

The Lord, the God of their fathers, sent persistently to them by his messengers, because he had compassion on his people and on his dwelling place; but they kept mocking the messengers of God, despising his words, and scoffing at his prophets, till the wrath of the Lord rose against them, till there was no remedy. (II Chron.36:15,16)

Perhaps some of the messengers were angels. Certainly many of them were the prophets whom the Lord had divinely called. At times God used even foreign nations to do such bidding (Hab.1:12), but they could not be called angels!

The angels are listed as cherubim, seraphim, and ophanim. The seraph is described as having six wings; the ophanim are the "wheels" of the vision of Ezekiel, that are indescribable. As for the cherubim, the artists of the Renaissance painted them as tiny winged boys, and modern usage has converted them into little cupids, but the Biblical cherubim were different, although just how they looked it is impossible to say. Their actual appearance has been forgotten. Dr. Albright makes an analogy from the winged sphinx or winged lion with human head found sculptured in Syria. The throne of the king of Byblos was supported by two such winged creatures. "So in Israelite symbolism the invisible Glory was conceived as enthroned upon the golden cherubim."¹

1. William Foxwell Albright, "What Were the Cherubim?" Bib. Arch., 1(1941) pp. 1-3.

There are many references to angels in the Psalms and elsewhere in the Old Testament, some of which may be poetic symbolism, for there are no words in mortal language to express the word of the Lord in the heart of man, much less are there words to describe the glories of the heavenly beings who are beyond the range of man's mind. Even so, these show that the Lord was able to make his presence felt among the people, meeting them on their own ground, speaking to them in ways that they could understand. Perhaps some impression could be gained of his angelic messengers by noting descriptive expressions used regarding them in the Bible passages:

- בְּנֵי אֱלֹהִים sons of God: Job 38:7.
 בְּנֵי אֱלִים sons of God, translated "heavenly beings,"
 Psalms 89:6 (verse 7 in Hebrew).
 קְדָשִׁים holy ones, Psalms 89:7 (verse 8 in Hebrew).
 אַבְרִירִים strong ones, translated "angels," Psalms 78:25.
 גִּבּוֹרִים mighty ones, Psalms 103:20.
 גַּבְרִיאֵל Gabriel, "mighty man of God," Daniel 8:6.
 מַלְאָכֵי-יְהוָה messenger of God, translated "angels" Psalms 34:7(8).
 מַלְאָכָיו his messengers, Psalms 91:11.
 מַלְאָכֵי-הַמְּשִׁחִית messengers of destruction, "destroying angels,"
 II Samuel 24:16.
 אֲזָצָה host—for warfare, I Kings 22:19.
 אֲזָצָהוּ his host, Psalms 148:2.
 שׂוֹרֵר watcher (Aramaic), Daniel 4:23(20).
 מִשְׁתָּרְתִּים his ministers, Psalms 103:21.
 שִׁרְפִּים seraphim, "cleansing fire" Isaiah 6:2,3.
 כְּרֻבִים cherubim, "guardians," Genesis 3:23; Exodus 25:18-20.
 כְּרוּבִים cherubim (different spelling), I Kings 6:23-28.
 כְּרוּב cherub (singular), Psalms 18:10(11).
 מִיכָאֵל Michael, "prince of God," Daniel 10:13,21.
 רִיחוֹת spirits (K.J.V.), winds (R.S.V.), Psalms 104:4.
 רוּחַ Spirit (capital letter), Ezekiel 3:12.
 אוֹפָנִים ophanim, "wheels," Ezekiel 1:16.
 אוֹפָן ophan (singular), Ezekiel 1:15.

F. Belief in Life After Death

1. First Direct Reference: Sheol

The first direct reference to life after death occurs when Joseph had been sold to the Midianites. His brothers deceived father Jacob, bringing to him Joseph's coat, dipped in blood, which Jacob recognized:

"It is my son's robe; a wild beast has devoured him; Joseph is without doubt torn to pieces." Then Jacob rent his garments, and put sackcloth on his loins, and mourned for his son many days. (Gen.37:33,34)

His sons and daughters tried to comfort him—a hypocritical sort of comfort, since they were guilty. Jacob did not know their guilt, but he instinctively refused their comfort, "No, I shall go down to Sheol to my son, mourning" (Gen.37:35). This reference to Sheol is so casual that it must have been a recognized belief, though mentioned here for the first time. Jacob apparently expected to join Joseph there, but it gave him no comfort, perhaps because there would be a long time of waiting before he could join him there, or because Sheol was such an unhappy place. It may be that there was a little of both ideas in his feeling. When, years later, the brothers returned from Egypt to tell of their difficulties, and that Simeon had been left behind as a hostage until they should bring Benjamin with them, Jacob again referred to Sheol:

"My son shall not go down with you, for his brother is dead, and he only is left. If harm should befall him on the journey that you are to make, you would bring down my gray hairs with sorrow to Sheol." (Gen.42:38)

2. The Book of God

Evidently Sheol was not a place to which they looked forward with any satisfaction, yet there must have been some aspect of it that was hopeful. When Moses went up on Mount Sinai to pray for the people because of their great sin in worshiping the golden calf, there is no direct reference to any life after death, but his prayer indicates that there is something of value in the plan of God for the future of those who follow him:

So Moses returned to the Lord and said, "Alas, this people have sinned a great sin; they have made for themselves gods of gold. But now, if thou wilt forgive their sin--and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of the book which thou hast written." But the Lord said to Moses, "Whoever has sinned against me, him will I blot out of my book."
(Ex.32:31,32)

There is no reference to that book again until centuries later when Malachi, the last of the Old Testament prophets, refers to it:

Then those who feared the Lord spoke with one another; the Lord heeded and heard them, and a book of remembrance was written before him of those who feared the Lord and thought on his name. "They shall be mine," says the Lord of hosts, "my special possession on the day when I act, and I will spare them as a man spares his son who serves him."
(Malachi 3:16,17)

3. A Gloomy View of Death

On the whole, the people of Israel were inclined to take a gloomy view of death. Instead of thinking of it as an opportunity for him to go to his reward for a lifetime of wonderful service, for Moses death was regarded as a punishment for a moment of impatience with an exasperating people:

And the Lord said to Moses . . . "Ascend this mountain of the Abarim, Mount Nebo, which is in the land of Moab opposite Jericho; and view the land of Canaan, which I give to the people of Israel for a possession; and die on the mountain which you ascend, and be gathered to your people, as Aaron your brother died in Mount Hor and was gathered to his people; because you broke faith with me in the midst of the people of Israel. . . . For you shall see the land before you; but you shall not go there, into the land which I give to the people of Israel."
(Deut.32:48-52)

The most notable thing about the death of Moses is that it seems to have been of little moment to him as far as he personally was concerned. He was only interested in seeing that the nation would be cared for and the great work continued. For that, Joshua was being prepared (Num.27:12-20). When in his turn Joshua came to the time of death, the situation was the same. "Now I am about to go the way of all the earth," said Joshua, apparently very

calmly. His interest was in Israel, and he summoned them to a great gathering where they renewed the covenant (Joshua 23:14-16; 24:1028).

The early life of Israel in Canaan was one of warfare. There was then much killing, and death must have been frequent. Yet there is little mention of it, and that little only a matter of history. When Saul spared the life of Agag, contrary to the command of the Lord, and Samuel called for him to be brought before him, Agag "came cheerfully" for he thought "the bitterness of death was past" (I Sam.15:32). But Agag was an Amalekite, and that may not be the way the Israelites thought of death, though it may have been a general feeling. However, King Saul preferred death to the imminent falling into the hands of the Philistines, no doubt noted for their cruel treatment of prisoners. The record of the Philistine treatment of the dead bodies of Saul and Jonathan shows that Saul was right (I Sam.31:4,9,10).

In the annals of the kings of both Judah and Israel there is a formula for the close of the reigns: they "slept with their fathers"—whether they were buried in Jerusalem, in Tirzah, or in Samaria. This may mean merely that their bodies were laid away in the royal graves; or it may have reference to the shadowy place where the souls went after death. The expression is used both early and late, but its use could mean that they were continuing to use a set formula, and signify little if anything about their belief.

4. David's Faith

The earliest indication of definite belief in life after death, with perhaps a recognition of one another in the next world, is when the child born to David and Bathsheba died. David fasted and prayed for his recovery—so much so that his servants were hesitant to tell him of the death lest he be overcome. But David then laid aside his mourning garments and entered upon his customary type of life. To his amazed servants he explained:

While the child was still alive, I fasted and wept; for I said, "Who knows whether the Lord will be gracious to me that the child may live? But now he is dead; why should I fast? Can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he will not return to me. (I Sam.12:16-23)

5. Heaven in the Sky

While there is a general impression that the abode of God is in heaven, as he comes "down" to speak with men, the first picture of the heavenly court is that given by the prophet Micaiah, of whom little else is known:

I saw the Lord sitting on his throne, and all the host
of heaven standing beside him, on his right hand and on
his left. (I Kings 22:19)

That is true unless the prologue of Job was written at an earlier time. As the date of that writing is uncertain, it cannot be fitted into any study of the development of ideas. The picture there is very similar to Micaiah's description: "The sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord" (Job 1:6;2:1). In neither place is there an indication as to where that throne of God was placed. When the time came for Elijah's death, there was a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, and then Elijah was taken "up" to heaven by a whirlwind (II Kings 2:11).

Many verses in the Psalms indicate that the throne of God is in heaven, above the earth:

The Lord looks down from heaven upon the children
of men
to see if there are any that act wisely,
that seek after God. (Psa.14:2)

The Lord looks down from heaven,
he sees all the sons of men;
from where he sits enthroned he looks forth
on all the inhabitants of the earth.
(Psa.33:13,14)

Turn again, O God of hosts!
Look down from heaven and see.
(Psa.80:14)

Faithfulness will spring up from the ground,
And righteousness will look down from the sky.
(Psa.85:11)

Let this be recorded for a generation to come,
so that a people yet unborn may yet praise the Lord;
that he looked down from his holy height,
from heaven the Lord looked at the earth.
(Psa.102:18,19)

6. Prophetic References to Life After Death

There is surprisingly little written about death and immortality, or about the place of departed spirits in the prophetic writings. The prophets were statesmen, deeply concerned with the conditions of the nation, holding up ethical ideals, preaching right living. Their concern was with earth more than with heaven. When they do speak of heaven, it is usually casually, as of something that everyone would understand and appreciate. Thus Amos uses the height of heaven and the depth of Sheol as an illustration of the fact that nobody can escape from the judgment of God:

Not one of them shall flee away,
not one of them shall escape.
Though they dig into Sheol,
from there shall my hand take them;
though they climb up to heaven,
from there will I bring them down.
(Amos 9:1,2)

A passage from the Psalms gives a similar thought:

Whither shall I go from thy Spirit?
Or whither shall I flee from thy presence?
If I ascend into heaven thou art there!
If I make my bed in Sheol, thou art there!
(Psa.139:7,8)

Hosea represents the people as deeply enmeshed in sin, beyond the hope of rescue—though later he finds that God is able to save. But that salvation is regarding life on earth, and Sheol is merely an illustration:

The iniquity of Ephraim is bound up,
his sin is kept in store. . . .
Shall I ransom thee from the power of Sheol?
Shall I redeem thee from Death?
O Death, where are your plagues?
O Sheol, where is your destruction?
Compassion is hid from my eyes.
Though he may flourish as the reed plant,
The east wind, the wind of the Lord
shall come. . . .
It shall strip his treasury
of every precious thins. (Hos.13:12-15)

In the vision which called Isaiah to his prophetic task, he saw the Lord "high and lifted up," but that was inside the Temple (Isa.6:1-8). That should have given him a glorious message—but alas, he lived among people so far astray that his main theme was a threat of judgment and call to repentance. With him also, Sheol was but an illustration:

Therefore my people go into exile
for want of knowledge; . . .
Therefore Sheol has enlarged its appetite
and opened its mouth beyond measure. . . .
Man is bowed down, and men are brought low,
and the eyes of the haughty are humbled. . . .
(Isa.5:13-15)

Isaiah warns Ephraim that there is no escape from death:

Because you have said, "We have made a covenant
with death,
and with Sheol we have an agreement;
when the overwhelming scourge passes through
it will not come to us." . . .
Therefore thus says the Lord God, . . .
"Then your covenant with death will be annulled,
and your agreement with Sheol will not stand;
When the overwhelming scourge passes through
you will be beaten down by it."
(Isa.28:15-18)

7. Pictures of Sheol in Psalms and Proverbs

Most of the pictures of life after death, even in the Psalms, where one might expect a soaring of the spirit, give a very gloomy outlook:

Turn, O Lord, save my life;
deliver me, for the sake of thy steadfast love.
For in death there is no remembrance of thee;
in Sheol who can give thee praise?
(Psa.6:4,5)

To thee, O Lord, I cried,
and to the Lord I made supplication:
"What profit is there in my death,
if I go down to the Pit?
Will the dust praise thee?
Will it tell of my faithfulness?"
(Psa.30:9)

Dost thou work wonders for the dead?
 Do the shades rise up to praise thee?
 Is thy steadfast love declared in the grave?
 Or thy faithfulness in Abaddon?
 Are thy wonders known in the darkness?
 Or thy saving help in the land of
 forgetfulness? (Psa.88:10-13)

A curse is pronounced upon the enemies by sending them to Sheol:

Let death come upon them;
 let them go down to Sheol alive;
 let them go away in terror into their
 graves. (Psa.55:15)

There are a few passages in Proverbs that give a little insight into the thought of the people regarding the realm of death:

Sheol and Abaddon lie open before the Lord,
 how much more the hearts of men.
 (Prov.15:11)

But there is a glimpse also of another type of life:

The wise man's path leads upward to life
 that he may avoid Sheol beneath.
 (Prov.15:24)

A similar thought is expressed, showing that death is something to be avoided, possibly chiefly because life on earth is desirable:

The fear of the Lord is a fountain of life,
 that one may avoid the snares of death.
 (Prov.14:27)

And there is a punishment that is remedial:

If you beat him with the rod,
 you will save his life from Sheol.
 (Prov.23:14)

There is danger of reading into these passages the understanding of a later day. This may mean merely that the days on earth will be prolonged. Death is represented as constantly waiting for souls: "Sheol and Abaddon are never satisfied" (Prov.27:20).

G. The Influence of the Babylonian Captivity

In spite of the fact that Israel felt herself called of God to be a nation apart, the influence of the surrounding nations was strong, and the people of Israel were constantly falling into their ways, and even adopting some pagan ceremonies into their worship. Both Egypt and Canaan had a part in moulding their thoughts in earlier days. The "Captivity" made Babylon a strong influence later--partly a spiritualizing force, for they learned that God could be found in far-away Babylon. Perhaps the experience of being in a strange land, and yet under the protection of the God of their homeland, brought them a new realization of a spiritual world. Ezekiel had wonderful visions of the glory of God and the splendor of the world beyond. To him, and to a few choice souls whose hearts were set on God, this called to service, sure that God was leading in spite of their national downfall. But the rank and file of the exiled people may have been made more susceptible to the Babylonian beliefs for this very reason.

1. Zoroastrianism

When Israel was first taken to Babylonia, they found a whole pantheon of gods of a nature cult not very different from that of Canaan. They may have been familiar with some of the myths, seeing practices which their prophets had been condemning. But there came a change with the Persian conquest of that country. It would probably be natural for the Jewish exiles to look with toleration if not with favor on the religion of Cyrus, who was, so they felt, called of God to restore them to their homeland and help them build the Temple in Jerusalem (Isaiah 44:28; 45:1). The religion of Cyrus was very different from any of the other religions with which they had come in contact.

In Persia there was a new religion, or such a reformation and vital change of the old Magian cult that it was practically new. Darius and Cyrus are both said to have been adherents. Zoroaster, or Zarathustra, to give him his Persian name, had purged away the many gods of the old pantheon, changing them into angels under the control of Ahura Mazda, the God of Light. The name of Mazda is found on an inscription of Ashur-banipal, about 2000 B.C., and this

religion was widespread in very early times in Parthia, Bachtria, and Media. It was almost a duo-theism, for they worshiped the forces of Light, but also placated the forces of Darkness. Both Light and Dark were very real powers, but there was always the hope that in the end the power of Light would be triumphant. There were many lesser gods, also angels and demons in the old religion. Zarathustra changed them into abstractions. Under Ahura Mazda were seven archangels, each in charge of some part of earth. The greatest was the guardian over Good Thought; then came Animals, Fire, Metals, Earth, Water, and Plants. Each good spirit had an opposing evil spirit.¹

The most attractive thing about this Zoroastrian teaching was that its outlook on life was optimistic. On the whole, however, it was too abstract for most people. So in later years, the abstractions became personified and were worshiped as of almost equal power with Ahura Mazda, and the demons were placated with rites that amounted to worship also. The demons attempt to defraud mankind of the immortal life that has been planned for them, and the good angels fight for man against them constantly. In the end the good will prevail, but there is a long hard struggle before the victory. A picturesque feature of their belief is that there is a bridge from earth to heaven, that was perhaps suggested by the Milky Way or the rainbow. This bridge spans the abyss of Hell. It is a broad highway when the righteous pass over it, and it shrinks to a razor's edge for the wicked, who fall off into the abyss below.²

This is a very brief sketch of all the elaborate angelic and demonic hosts of the Magian hierarchy, but it may suggest that the later writings of the Old Testament show influence of these pagan sources. There is opposition to this theory however. Some of the Jewish scholars think that there is enough in the Old Testament background about the angels of God for a natural development without teaching from outside.³

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1. A. V. W. Jackson, Zoroaster, Prophet of Iran (New York: Columbia Press, 1928) -- No special page.
 2. James S. Moulton, The Treasure of the Magi (London: Oxford University Press, 1917).
 3. R. T. Herford, The Truth About the Pharisees (New York: Intercollegiate Menorah Association, 1925).

2. Babylonian Reflections in the Later Prophecies

Isaiah gives vivid and horrible pictures of conditions in Sheol which may reflect Babylonian beliefs, since this is probably a doom song over the fall of that nation to the Persians, with special reference to the king:

Your pomp is brought down to Sheol,
the sound of your harps;
maggots are the bed beneath you,
and worms are your covering.
How you are fallen from heaven,
O Day Star, son of Dawn! . . .
You said in your heart,
I will ascend to heaven;
above the stars of God
I will set my throne on high. . . .
But you are brought down to Sheol,
to the depths of the Pit.

(Isa.14:9-15)

However, this seems to mean little more than the grave itself, for in the next few lines it is of burial he is speaking:

All the kings of the nations lie in glory,
each in his own tomb;
but you are cast out, away from your sepulchre,
like a loathed untimely birth.

(Isa.14:18,19)

Most of the passages in the Old Testament dealing with angelic forces, and that have to do specifically with immortality, are counted among the post-exilic writings. Some of the very lovely Psalms belong here. A much stronger influence is seen in the Inter-Testamental writings, but it can be detected earlier also. When return from Babylon was made possible, it seemed that all their dreams were being realized, and there were paeans of joy:

When the Lord restored the fortunes of Zion
we were like those who dream.
Then our mouth was filled with laughter,
and our tongue with shouts of joy;
then they said among the nations,
"The Lord has done great things for them."
The Lord had done great things for us;
We are glad.

(Psa.126:1-3)

They went out in great exaltation and hope, under the leadership of the One and Only God. They remembered His many promises given to them through the ages by the voice of the prophets:

He will raise an ensign for the nations,
and will assemble the outcasts of Israel,
and gather the dispersed of Judah
from the four corners of the earth.
(Isa.11:12)

"For thus says the Lord: When seventy years are completed for Babylon, I will visit you, and I will fulfil to you my promise and bring you back to this place. For I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope. Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will hear you. You will seek me and find me; when you seek me with all your heart, I will be found by you, says the Lord, and I will restore your fortunes and gather you from all the nations and all the places where I have driven you, says the Lord, and I will bring you back to the place from which I sent you into exile.
(Jer.29:10-14)

Now was the time! This was their God and they were His people, and all the glories of the former days were to be restored. These had no doubt grown extensively in their minds, according to their dreams and traditions, while they were far away in Babylon:

Turn to me and be saved,
all the ends of the earth! . . .
For I am God, and there is no other;
I am God, and there is none like me,
declaring the end from the beginning,
and from ancient times things not yet done,
saying, "My counsel shall stand,
and I will accomplish my purpose."
(Isa.45:22;46:9,10)

God would send his angels to protect them from all danger: .

For he will give his angels charge of you
to guard you in all your ways.
On their hands they will bear you up,
lest you dash your foot against a stone.
(Psa.91:11,12)

This was not mere rhapsody! They believed it and acted upon it in a practical way. Ezra and a group of people from Babylon were returning to Jerusalem and carrying with them the gold and silver vessels from the Temple in Jerusalem which Nebuchadnezzar had taken away. They also had much money, and other things provided out of the king's treasury, so there might be grave danger of bandits along the way:

Then I proclaimed a fast there, at the river Ahava, that we might humble ourselves before our God, to seek from him a straight way for ourselves, our children, and all our goods. For I was ashamed to ask the king for a band of soldiers and horsemen to protect us against the enemy on the way; since we had told the king, "The hand of our God is for good upon all that seek him, and the power of his wrath is against all that forsake him." So we fasted and besought our God for this, and he listened to our entreaty. (Ezra 8:21-23)

They faced tremendous tasks in Jerusalem. The Chaldean armies had left it nothing but a pile of rubble. But they faced it undaunted:

"This is the word of the Lord to Zerubbabel: Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, says the Lord of hosts. What are you, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel you shall become a plain" (Zech.4:6,7)

H. Speculative Wisdom Literature

1. Ecclesiastes

A type of wisdom literature developed in later years with speculation upon the meaning of life and the expectations in death. The "Preacher" of Ecclesiastes looks on the dark side, but his questions show that there were some people thinking hopefully of the after life:

The fate of the sons of men and the fate of the beasts is the same; as one dies, so dies the other. They all have the same breath, and man has no advantage over the beasts; for all is vanity. All go to one place; all are from the dust and all turn to dust again. Who knows whether the spirit of man goes upward and the spirit of the beast goes down to earth? (Eccl.3:19-21)

He who is joined with the living has hope, for a living dog is better than a dead lion. For the living know that they will die, but the dead know nothing, and they have no more reward; but the memory of them is lost. . . . Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with your might; for there is no work or thought or knowledge or wisdom in Sheol, to which you are going. (Eccl.9:4-10)

The words of his closing chapter perhaps express his final faith, though he follows them immediately with his special refrain, "all is vanity":

-- Man goes to his eternal home . . . and the dust returns to the earth as it was, and the spirit returns to God who gave it. (Eccl.12:5-7)

2. Job

Job, in the nature of his subject, is more concerned with death than any of the other writers in the Old Testament. He is in pain and misery. He longs for death, yet is afraid of it. However, it must be better than suffering:

Why did I not die at birth? . . .
For then I would have lain down and been quiet;
I should have slept; then I should have been
at rest,

With kings and counselors of the earth. . . .
There the wicked cease from trembling,
and there the weary are at rest.
There the prisoners are at ease together;
they hear not the voice of the taskmaster.
The small and the great are there,
and the slave is free from his master.

(Job 3:11-19)

The eye of him who sees me will behold me no more;
While thy eyes are upon me I shall be gone.
As the cloud fades and vanishes,
so he who goes down to Sheol does not come up;
he returns no more to his house,
nor does his place know him any more.

(Job 8:8-10)

Are not the days of my life few? . . .
. . . I go whence I shall not return,
To the land of gloom and darkness,
the land of gloom and chaos,
where light is as darkness. (Job 10:20-22)

Job sees a ray of hope as he looks at a tree, but he is not sure:

For there is hope for a tree,
 if it be cut down, that it will sprout again,
 and that the shoots will not cease. . . .
 But a man dies and is laid low;
 man breathes his last, and where is he?
 As waters fail from a lake,
 and a river wastes and dries up,
 So man lies down and rises not again;
 till the heavens are no more he will not wake,
 or be roused out of his sleep. . . .
 If a man dies, shall he live again?
 All the days of my service I would wait,
 till my release should come.
 Thou wouldst call, and I would answer thee.
 (Job 14:7-14)

Job's three friends have much to say about the dismal outlook for the wicked. Thus Eliphaz, "They shall perish forever" (Job 4:20); and Bildad, "The hope of the godless men shall perish" (Job 8:13); while Zophar puts it strongly, "He will perish forever, like his own dung" (Job 20:7). Whether there would be better hope for the righteous is not indicated. Their words about those who do right have to do with the blessings of life on earth.

Later Job makes a triumphant statement, "the most momentous expression of faith which may be found in the poem, and perhaps in the entire Hebrew Bible."¹ The Hebrew of this passage is difficult, and Job may not have been as gloriously sure as the English translations seem to say. Even discounting it quite a bit, however, this still gives a picture of faith:

O that my words were written!
 O that they were inscribed in a book!
 O that with an iron pen and lead
 they were graven in the rock for ever!
 For I know that my Redeemer lives,
 and at last he will stand upon the earth;
 and after my skin has been thus destroyed,
 then without my flesh I shall see God,
 Whom I shall see on my side,
 and my eyes shall behold, and not another.
 (Job 19:25-27)

1. Samuel Terrien, "Exegesis: Job," Interpreter's Bible, III, 1051.

J. The View of Death in the Later Psalms

There is a happier view of death found in some of the Psalms, and these are generally conceded to be the later ones:

I keep the Lord always before me;
because he is at my right hand, I shall not
be moved.
Therefore my heart is glad, and my soul rejoices;
my body also dwells secure.
For thou dost not give me up to Sheol,
or let thy godly one see the Pit.
Thou dost show me the path of life;
in thy presence are pleasures for evermore.
(Psa.16:8-11)

Even when the way is dark, God's presence gives security:

Even though I walk through the valley of the
shadow of death,
I fear no evil;
for thou art with me;
thy rod and thy staff,
they comfort me. (Psa.23:4)

Possibly an eternal reward is expressed in:

Thou dost guide me with thy counsel,
and afterward thou wilt receive me to glory.
(Psa.73:24)

While there is no hope for the wicked, there is a bright outlook for all those who follow the Lord:

Man cannot abide in his pomp,
he is like the beasts that perish.
This is the fate of those who have foolish confidence,
the end of those who are pleased with their
portion.
Like sheep they are appointed for Sheol;
Death shall be their shepherd;
straight to the grave they descend,
and their form shall waste away;
Sheol shall be their home.
But God will ransom my soul from the power
of Sheol,
for he will receive me. (Psa.49:12-15)

There are some beautiful passages in the Psalms which are often given an interpretation that belongs to a later day. This one, for example:

As for me, I shall behold thy face in righteousness;
when I awake, I shall be satisfied with beholding
thy form. (Psa, 17:15)

"Doubtless this meant for him a physical awakening on an earthly morning, when he would repair to God's house and find himself in harmony with the God whose house it was."¹ However, if this is one of the late Psalms, written near the close of the period, it could have reference to life after death in the presence of God, as a study of Inter-Testamental writings later will show.

K. Individual Responsibility

A new spirit of individual responsibility and individual dignity grew in Israel also. In the days before the captivity, when the armies of Chaldea were threatening Jerusalem, Jeremiah had tried to lay it upon the hearts of the people that they were individually responsible before the Lord:

In those days they shall no longer say:
"The fathers have eaten sour grapes,
and the children's teeth are set on edge."
But everyone shall die for his own sin; each man who eats
sour grapes, his teeth shall be set on edge. (Jer. 31:29,30)

During the days in Babylon, Ezekiel had continued this message and enlarged upon it. Sin was an individual matter, and also repentance:

The soul that sins shall die. The son shall not suffer
for the iniquity of the father, nor the father suffer for
the iniquity of the son; the righteousness of the righteous
shall be upon himself, and the wickedness of the wicked
shall be upon himself. . . .

Why will you die, O house of Israel? For I have no
pleasure in the death of anyone, says the Lord God; so
turn and live. (Ezek. 18:20,31,32)

Such teaching gave a new meaning to life and death. God had led the people, by slow degrees as they were able to grasp it, to the high point of faith.

1. J. R. P. Schlater, "Exposition: Psalms 1-41," Int. Bible, IV, 91.

A Primer for children may fairly pass over in silence this or that important piece of knowledge . . . not yet fitted for the capacities of the children. . . . But it must contain absolutely nothing which blocks up the way toward the knowledge which is held back, or misleads the children from it. . . .

In the same way, in the writings of the Old Testament, those Primers for the rude Israelite people, unpracticed in thought, the doctrines of the immortality of the soul, and future recompences, might be fairly left out: but they were bound to contain nothing which could have even procrastinated the progress of the people for whom they were written in their way to this grand truth.¹

L. The Messianic Hope

1. The Kingdom of God

During all these centuries the Jews were looking for a glorious age that never came. Time and again they hoped that some change in the balance of power would give them the opportunity to fulfil their glorious destiny which they believed to be theirs as the People of God. But that opportunity never came, and generation after generation passed. At last the Jews began to realize that if ever a glorious destiny was to come for them, it could never arise out of the ordinary course of the world's history. It would have to come directly from God Himself.²

To the glory of Israel it is recognized that they did not lose faith in God. Their ideals took on new character. They never doubted the power of God to fulfil his promises; they just transferred them to a new status:

"For behold I create new heavens
and a new earth;
and the former things shall not be remembered
or come to mind.
But be glad and rejoice forever
in that which I create. . . .
They shall not hurt or destroy
in all my holy mountain,"

says the Lord.
(Isa. 65:17, 18, 25)

1. Lessing, op. cit., Harvard Classics, XXXII, 207.

2. Norman H. Snaith, The Jews from Cyrus to Herod (New York: Abingdon Press, Undated), p. 96.

2. The Day of Judgment

When the time for this New Kingdom should come, there must be a people worthy to live in it, and something must be done about the faithless. In days past there had been prophecies of a time of great destruction for the enemies of Israel. At first it was the hope of their own victorious warfare, but later it came to mean the activity of the Lord in bringing in the New Age, and a supernatural destruction of all who failed to follow him and keep his commandments. But there will be a triumph for the nation:

On that day the Lord will put a shield about the inhabitants of Jerusalem so that the feeblest among them on that day shall be like David, and the house of David shall be like God, like the angel of the Lord at their head. And on that day I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem. (Zech.12:8)

But there will also be a personal test:

For, behold, the day comes, burning like an oven, when all the arrogant and all evildoers will be stubble: the day that comes shall burn them up, says the Lord of hosts, so that it will leave them neither root nor branch. But for you who fear my name, the sun of righteousness shall rise with healing in its wings. (Mal.4:1,2)

3. A Personal Messiah

In that day there will be a King of the Lord's choosing. It is no doubt true that at first their expectation was that one of the kings of the royal line would be so true to the Lord, and to all those ideals for the nation, that he would deserve the thought. Later their disappointment in their kings caused them to look for a divine leader from heaven: the "new heaven and new earth" required a new type of king:

Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion!
shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem!
Lo, your king comes to you;
triumphant and victorious is he,
humble and riding on an ass,
on a colt, the foal of an ass.
(Zech.9:9)

4. A Resurrection

As this glorious future came more and more to be an entirely new creation, the people began to fear that they would never live to see it, and to hope for a return to earth in that day. A few passages in Isaiah which are considered to be late interpolations suggest the overcoming of death:

He will swallow up death forever, and the Lord will wipe away tears from all faces, and the reproach of his people he will take away from the earth. (Isa.25:8)

There is even a resurrection idea:

Thy dead shall live, their bodies shall rise.
O dwellers in the dust, awake and sing for joy!
For thy dew is a dew of light,
and on the land of the shades thou wilt let it fall. (Isa.26:19)

This seems to refer to the nation as a whole, for "Israel shall blossom and put forth shoots, and fill the whole earth with fruit" (Isa.27:6).

Daniel is the only one who predicts individual resurrection for both the good and the evil, and a general judgment:

At that time your people shall be delivered, everyone whose name shall be found written in the book. And many of those that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life and some to shame and everlasting contempt. And those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the firmament; and those who turn many to righteousness like the stars for ever and ever. (Dan.12:1-3)

Thus at the close of the Old Testament, the people felt sure of life after death. They were rather hazy about it, but they sensed a form of judgment there, a distinction in the treatment of the wicked and the righteous. They were sure that God was the One great God of all the earth, and that they were in a distinct sense the "people of God," and they looked for some type of world supremacy. A few were thinking that there would be a special leader sent from God; a few were looking for a resurrection of some kind. Perhaps all such expectations were misty at this time, but began to crystallize in the later age.

CHAPTER X

THE APOCRYPHA

A. The Historical Background

Although a few of the passages of the Old Testament belong to a later date, on the whole there was a period of from four hundred to two hundred years between the Old and New Testaments. This time has been called the "Centuries of Silence" although there was some activity in the literary field, and in other lines there was anything but silence.

The phrase is most untrue; for as a whole, this time was vocal with the cry of battle in which empire contended with empire, and philosophy with philosophy. It was an age of earnest and angry contention.¹

After the return from the Babylonian captivity, Judea was a dependency of Persia, with a governor of its own, and some measure of independence. During the reign of Artaxerxes III Palestine joined with Egypt in revolt against Persia, and was duly crushed.² From that time on, Judea was ruled directly by the Persian Satrap for Syria, Phoenicia and Palestine, who was stationed in Samaria. The High Priest, however, was the first man in the "theocracy" and gradually established himself in the highest dignity of the nation.³ When Alexander the Great was leading his armies in world conquest, Judea surrendered to him without a siege, and so avoided the fate of Tyre, but did not improve their national status. The people were always hoping for a return of their national prestige, with each change looking for something better—hopes usually baseless and unfulfilled. When the early death of Alexander resulted in the division of his empire, Palestine was too small a section to figure very

1. T. R. Slicer, Between the Testaments, Hist. for Ready Ref., III, 1952.

2. Norman H. Snaith, op. cit., p. 20.

3. I. M. Wise, History of the Hebrews' Second Commonwealth, 1st period, Ch.4, Hist. for Ready Ref., III, 1953.

significantly, and led a chequered career between the greater nations on either side: the Ptolemies of Egypt and the Seleucids of Babylonia and Syria "tossed little Palestine as a baseball between them." At one time Palestine was given as a marriage portion to Syria, when Antiochus I married Berenice, daughter of Ptolemy II Philadelphus; and again to Egypt when Antiochus III gave his daughter Cleopatra as wife to Ptolemy Epiphanes. But Antiochus IV won it back again in warfare.¹ He was the one known as Epiphanes, and his tyrannical rule and persecutions caused the Maccabaeen uprising, although there were contributory causes in internal conflicts over taxation money and the office of the High Priest.

The Maccabaeen uprising was at first almost exclusively on religious grounds, and its successful culmination should have marked the end of the hostilities; but they "did not immediately turn from wolves to lambs"² but continued through many years and alterations of success and failure, until they finally succeeded in conquering the last Seleucidian stronghold, under the leadership of Simon Maccabaeus. Then "the yoke of the heathen was lifted from Israel" (II Mac.13:4).

And the land of Judah was at peace as long as Simon lived; he sought the good of his nation; his rule and his renown pleased them all his life. . . . He made peace in the land, and Israel rejoiced with great joy. Each man sat under his vine and his fig tree, and there was no one that could make them afraid.
(I Mac.14:4-13)

Judah became once more, in 142 B.C., an independent nation, and remained so for eighty years. Under the rule of John Hyrcanus it attained the height of its power, with the kingdom almost as extensive as in the time of David, so that the people were thinking joyously that the wonderful predictions of the prophets regarding their restoration were reaching fulfilment. After the death of John Hyrcanus conditions deteriorated rapidly, both by reason of foreign conquests, and through internal quarrels.³ There was a brief resurgence of

1. Edwyn Robert Bevan, "Ptolemies," Ency. Brit. (1946), XVIII, 731, 732.

2. R. H. Pfeiffer, History of New Testament Times with an Introduction to the Apocrypha (New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1949), p. 15.

3. Ibid., p. 19 f.

power under Alexander Jannaeus who extended the kingdom farther, and also became both High Priest and King. Internal troubles hampered him at home. At this time the rivalry between Pharisees and Saducees came to a head, finally blazing into civil war, with Alexander on the side of the Saducees. On his deathbed he advised his wife to make peace with the Pharisees, which she did. She also placed her son Hyrcanus in the High Priesthood, retaining the royal authority for herself. Her death a year later was the occasion for a renewal of hostilities, and this time Rome interfered. The Roman general, Pompey, marched into Jerusalem and Judea became a Roman province, in 62 B.C.¹

Though the time of the Seleucid-Ptolemy domination was one of strife and oftentimes persecution for the Jews, it was also one of cultural development. The settlement of Greeks and Syrians in Palestine was promoted, and the Jews migrated to other lands. Greek became the universal tongue, though Aramaic continued to be used in Palestine, and Hebrew was the language of the Temple and Synagogue. Led on by their love of trade, the Jews became numerous in the commercial cities of Asia Minor and Egypt, along the coast of Africa to Cyrene, and in some of the port cities of Greece and Macedonia. Thus two movements crossed each other: Greek or hellenized Asians into Palestine, and an outpouring of Jews into cities speaking the Greek language. No longer was Judea an isolated kingdom. While there was a strong Pharisaic party opposed to the international influences, the Saducees who were more powerful along some lines, wanted to live like other nations. They wanted to eat and drink and intermarry with them, and while they were attentive to their own Temple worship, some of them were not averse to honoring the gods of these foreign lands also. Those who had migrated to foreign lands "were too gifted intellectually to resist the magnetic power of the Hellenistic tongue and modes of thought."² The younger generation did not know their mother tongue. During the reign of Ptolemy II the law of Moses was translated into Greek at Alexandria to meet the needs of these Jews of the Dispersion, and the rest of the Old Testament was not long in being translated also.³

1. Snaith, *op. cit.*, pp. 45-48.

2. J. J. I. Dollinger, The Gentile and the Jew in the Courts of the Temple of Christ, Hist. for Ready Ref., III, 1953-1954.

3. Dollinger, *ibid.*

B. The Apocryphal Writings

The word Apocrypha comes from a Greek word meaning "hidden," probably with the thought that they were for private and not public reading, in other words, not accepted into the canon of Scripture. While some of them were originally written in Hebrew or Aramaic, few of these parts have been preserved, and the books are almost entirely known from their Greek versions. Some of them were originally written in Greek. As Hebrew was the "holy language" of Temple and Synagogue, these were omitted from their Scriptures by the Council of Jamnia, held in A.D. 90.¹ These books were included in the Greek versions of the Old Testament and were thus a part of the Bible of the early church, which used the Greek texts. Now they are generally disregarded by Protestants, though still a part of the Roman Catholic Bible. They are sometimes printed in a separate compartment between the two Testaments, where they obviously belong. They were written by Jews in the last two centuries before the Christian era, with the exception of I Esdras which is earlier, and II Esdras, which is later.² II Esdras, being written much later, is not included by Charles in the Apocrypha, but placed with the Pseudepigrapha.³ Though these books are no part of the Protestant Bible, they are valuable for an understanding of the history of the time, and for the development of their thought and religious ideas during those years.

Great values reside in the Apocrypha: the Prayer of Manasseh is a notable piece of liturgy; I Maccabees is of great historical value for its story of Judaism in the second century before Christ. . . . The additions to Esther insert a religious color to that romantic story; Judith, Susanna, and Tobit, while fascinating pieces of fiction, were meant by their writers to teach important lessons to their contemporaries. Wisdom and Ecclesiasticus are among the masterpieces of Jewish sages.⁴

1. Pfeiffer, op. cit., p. 64.

2. Pfeiffer, The Apocrypha According to the Authorized Version, with an Introduction by R. H. Pfeiffer (Harper & Brothers Publishers, Undated) p. vii.

3. R. H. Charles, Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha, Vol. II.

4. Edgar J. Goodspeed, The Apocrypha, an American Translation (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1951), Introduction, p. vi.

C. Conditions of the People and Nation Reflected in the Writings

1. Extended Periods of Mourning

The discouragement of the early days of this period can be recognized by the extended periods of mourning for the dead that are prevalent at this time. Thus Judith is cited as praiseworthy in the book that bears her name because after burying her husband Manasseh "with his fathers in the field" (Jud.8:3) she continued to mourn for him four years and three months, wearing sackcloth next to her skin and her widow's garments, and to fast continually, except on the Sabbaths (Jud.8:4,5).

Judith, whose name in Hebrew is Jehudith, or "Jewess" is, like Esther, a fictitious story about a woman who, through cunning and daring, brought about the death of the enemy of her people, and saved the Jews from an impending massacre. The story is set in the days of Nebuchadnezzar, with Holofernes, general of the army, ordered to destroy her nation. Judith laid aside her widow's weeds, decked herself in her most gorgeous clothes and with jewels, and by her charms tricked Holofernes into drinking himself into a stupor, and then killed him. That Judith carried his head back to her people as proof of her deed, shows the barbaric condition of the times! Judith feasted with the people in celebration of their victory for three months, then returned to her quiet life. The atmosphere of the book is that of the Maccabaeian period, and there are many historical situations during the struggle of the Jews for their independence to which this incident could refer.¹

That the type of Judith's mourning was not exaggerated can be recognized by other examples from that same period. When Judas Maccabaeus was killed in battle, there was great mourning for him:

Jonathan and Simon took Judas, their brother, and buried him in the tomb of his forefathers in Modin. And they bewailed him, and all Israel made a great lamentation for him, and mourned many days, and said:

How is the mighty one fallen, the saviour of
Israel! (I Mac.9:19-21)

1. Pfeiffer, op. cit., pp. 285, 294.

Then Jonathan was chosen leader of the Judean forces in place of his brother Judas, and after a successful campaign, he too was killed in battle.

Simon went, and took the bones of Jonathan his brother and buried him at Modin, the city of his fathers. And all Israel made a great lamentation over him, and mourned for him for many days. (I Mac.13:25)

There was great mourning for national calamities as well as for the death of heroes. One notable instance was when Antiochus Epiphanes plundered the Temple at Jerusalem:

There was great mourning in Israel in every place:
And the rulers and elders groaned;
Virgins and young men languished,
And the beauty of the women faded away;
Every bridegroom took up his lament;
She that sat in the bridal chamber mourned.
And the land was moved for her inhabitants,
And all the house of Jacob was clothed with shame.
(I Mac.1:25-28)

Mattathias and his sons (the Maccabees) tore their clothes and put on sack-cloth and mourned "very sore" for the conditions of the city, and as they fled from the place, they called upon all who would to follow and join the guerilla band which they organized (I Mac.2:14,27). For every new act of persecution, the people "rent their garments, and made great lamentations, and put ashes on their heads" (I Mac.4:39).

While I Maccabees is anonymous, it can be deduced from the text that the author was a Palestinian Jew writing about 100 B.C. The book was written in Hebrew evidently, for the Greek translation is so literal that frequently the Hebrew text can be recognized. It can therefore be accepted as an accurate picture of the conditions and feelings of the people of the time. There was great mourning and also great demonstrations of their fierce anger; vengeance taken upon the foe was a cause for glory. "Like earlier Hebrew historians, the author is passionately patriotic, uniting nationalism and religion in a single ardent devotion."¹

1. Pfeiffer, op. cit., pp. 484, 491, 492.

II Maccabees covers the same ground as I Maccabees, but it is written from a different standpoint, and might be compared somewhat with the relation of Samuel-Kings to Chronicles in the Old Testament.¹ The writer was probably an Alexandrian Jew, "well-intentioned, somewhat pompous, and devout."² He wrote an introduction explaining his work, an abbreviation of a five-volume history written by Jason of Cyrene, which he had prepared at great labor in late hours, "aimed at attracting those who are fond of reading, at smoothing the path for those who like to memorize their facts, and at being of some service to our readers in general" (II Mac.2:25). This book gives special attention to God's protecting care of his Temple, and great mourning is reported when Heliodorus confiscated funds given for widows and orphans:

No one could look at the mien of the high-priest without feeling a pang of heart. His countenance and changed color betrayed the agony of his soul. For terror and a shuddering of the body had come over the man, which plainly showed to the onlookers the grief that was in his heart. As for the people in the houses, they flocked out with a rush to join in the common supplication. . . . The married women, girt under the breasts with sackcloth, thronged the streets. . . . One could not but pity the populace, all prostrate with one accord, and the anxiety of the high-priest in his sore distress.
(II Mac.3:16-21)

Baruch is really a pseudepigraphical book, since it purports to have been written by the secretary of Jeremiah, but relies so much on Daniel that this is not possible. Its Greek is very Hebraic; the book was probably written in Hebrew originally and poorly translated, or else its author was a Jew with a limited knowledge of Greek. Its date is estimated at about 150 B.C.³ There is a reflection of mourning ceremonies in the picture of false priests:

In their temples the priests sit on seats, having their clothes rent, and their heads and beards shaven, and nothing upon their heads. They roar and cry before their gods as men do at the feast when one is dead.

(Bar.6:31-33—Epistle of Jeremy)

1. Charles, *Apocrypha*, p. 130.

2. Pfeiffer, *op. cit.*, pp. 364, 365.

3. *Ibid.*, pp. 413, 417.

2. Attempts to Check the Extravagance of Mourning

There seems to have been even at an earlier date than this a desire to curb the extravagance of the mourning customs. The writer of Ecclesiasticus, Jesus, the son of Sirach, probably wrote about 180 B.C. in Palestine. His grandson translated his writing into Greek, probably at Alexandria in Egypt in 132 B.C.¹ He does not place a very high value upon death and the grave:

A man is king today and dead tomorrow.
 And when a man dies,
 Reptiles, animals, and worms become his portion.
 (Ecclus.10:10,11)

One does not have to question how he arrived at that conclusion. "Dust thou art and unto dust shalt thou return" (Gen.3:19, K.J.V.) is still part of many burial services. That is the way of all flesh, and the "reptiles, animals and worms" were very familiar figures. The elaborate preparation of the body for burial, with salt and spices of various kinds, even to mummification; the building of rock tombs; perhaps even cremation; all were no doubt attempts to keep those "reptiles, animals and worms" away. There was also a certain amount of ceremony due the departed:

My child, for the dead let your tears fall,
 And like one who is suffering terribly begin your lament.
 Wrap his body up fittingly,
 And do not neglect his burial.
 Weep bitterly and wail passionately
 And show your grief as he may deserve
 For one day, or perhaps two, to avert criticism;
 Then be comforted for your sorrow.
 For death comes of sorrow,
 And sorrow of heart prostrates one's strength. . . .
 But do not resign your heart to grief;
 Dismiss it, but remember your end;
 Do not forget it, for he will not come back;
 You cannot help him, and you will harm yourself. . . .
 When the dead is at rest, let his memory rest,
 And be comforted for him when his spirit departs.
 (Ecclus.38:16-23, Goodspeed Translation)

1. Pfeiffer, op. cit., pp. 364,365.

Earlier he allows seven days of mourning for the dead (Ecclus.22:12). But he shows a philosophical attitude toward death, which has to do entirely with leaving this earth, and does not consider any after life:

O death, how bitter is the remembrance of you
 To a man at peace among his possessions,
 To a man free from distractions and prosperous in everything,
 Still vigorous enough to enjoy his food!
 O death, your sentence is good
 For a needy man of failing strength,
 In extreme old age and distracted about everything;
 Who is contrary, and has lost his patience.
 Do not fear the sentence of death;
 Remember those who went before you and those who come after.
 This is the sentence of the Lord upon all flesh and blood,
 And how can you refuse what is the will of the Most High?
 (Ecclus.41:1-3, Goodspeed Tr.)

3. The Importance of Burial

In the Apocryphal writings, burial is very important. God was punishing the people for their sins when he allowed the heathen conquerors to throw out the bones of their kings and fathers from their graves, and leave them to "the heat of the day and the frost of the night." (Bar.2:24,25)

Tobit performed funeral rites as acts of pious compassion for the dead:

In the days of Shalmanezar, I did many almsdeeds to my brethren who were my kindred: . . . If I saw any of my nation dead and cast forth behind the wall of Nineveh, I buried him. And whomsoever Sennacherib slew, . . . I buried. For in his wrath he slew many of the children of Israel, and I stole away their bodies and buried them. And Sennacherib sought them and found them not. And a certain one of those of Nineveh went and informed the king concerning me, that it was I who buried them, and that I was hid. And when I perceived that the king knew concerning me and that I was sought for to be put to death, I was afraid and ran away.
 (Tob.1:16-20)

Later the angel Gabriel praised Tobit for his good deeds, and particularly because "you buried the dead, and did not shrink from leaving dinner to go and lay out the dead." (Tob.12:12,13).

When Tobit died in his turn, his son Tobias gave him honored burial:

And they laid him upon his bed and he died; and he was buried magnificently. And when his mother died, Tobias buried her with his father, and he and his wife departed to Media and dwelt in Ecbatana with Raguel his father-in-law. And he sustained their old age in honor and buried them in Ecbatana in Media. (Tob.14:11-13)

The Goodspeed translation adds "and he gave his father-in-law and his mother-in-law splendid funerals."

4. Memorials

Not only was burial important, but the monuments erected over the graves were often most magnificent. In the earlier days such monuments were only for kings. One of the causes of Shebna's downfall was that he dared to "hew out a tomb on the height and carve a habitation for yourself in the rock" (Isa.22:16). But the whole Maccabaeon family were gloriously honored.

Simon built a monument over the grave of his father and his brothers, and made it high so that it would be seen, with polished stone on back and front. And he erected seven pyramids in a row, for his father and his mother and his four brothers. And he made devices for these, setting up great columns and putting on the columns trophies of armor for an everlasting memorial, and beside the armor carved prows of ships, so that they could be seen by all who sailed the sea. Such was the monument that he built at Modin, and that still stands today. (I Mac.13:26-30)

No doubt that monument has long gone to decay, but all over the land of Palestine there are many great monuments that have been standing for long centuries, witnessing to the fact that men considered the memory of earth a sort of everlasting life. There was some thought of this kind held back in Old Testament times:

Now Absalom in his lifetime had taken and set up for himself a pillar which is in the King's Valley, for he said, "I have no son to keep my name in remembrance"; he called the pillar after his own name, and it is called Absalom's monument to this day. (II Sam.18:18)

The remembrance of Absalom is of the wrong kind! A monument still stands in his name—not likely the same one that he built, but one that represents it. It can be seen on the road past Jerusalem, not far from the St. Andrews gate, riddled with holes from stones thrown at it by the Jews, because he was a very wicked son who rebelled against his father (II Sam.15:1-11).

Jesus the son of Sirach suggests a different type of memorial:

Let us now praise famous men, and our fathers that begat us.

The Lord hath wrought great glory by them through his great power from the beginning. . . .

There be of them, that have left a name behind them, that their praise might be reported.

And some there be which have no memorial; who are perished, as though they had never been; and are become as though they had never been born; and their children after them.

But these were merciful men, whose righteousness hath not been forgotten.

With their seed shall continually remain a good inheritance, and their children are within the covenant.

Their seed standeth fast, and their children for their sakes.

Their seed shall remain forever, and their glory shall not be blotted out.

Their bodies are buried in peace; but their name liveth for evermore.

The people will tell of their wisdom, and the congregation will shew forth their praise.

(Ecclus.44:1,2,8-15, K.L.V.)

D. The Prevalence of Spirits

The belief in spirits, both good and bad, that took an active part in the life of men, is quite characteristic of the times, an inheritance from both primitive Judaism and the Persian influence of the Babylonian days, to which were added Greek, Egyptian and other influences due to the Diaspora. This is nowhere so vividly found as in Tobit. This book is found in three of the most important manuscripts of the Old Testament: Sinaiticus, Vaticanus, and Alexandrinus, so it was once considered definitely as Scripture, and it has been held in high esteem by many. Martin Luther wrote of it,

"Is it history? Then it is holy history. Is it fiction? Then it is truly beautiful, wholesome, and profitable fiction, the performance of a gifted poet."¹ The events are said to occur in Media about 722-612 B.C., but the historical and geographical settings are inaccurate. It could have been written in Aramaic about 200 B.C., but it echoes some of the feelings of the Jews of the Diaspora. There is a mixture of real piety and oriental superstition, a combination of the strictest Jewish practices and tenets with oriental folklore.²

Popular religious and magical speculations, current mythology and demonology, ethical and moral maxims of his day, traditional folklore and romantic legend, all contributed their quota to the education of the author. They widened his outlook on life without vitiating the spirituality of his religion or the reality of his adhesion to Judaism. They endowed him with the culture necessary to a writer whose appeal was probably directed to the educated pagan as well as the enlightened Jew of the Diaspora in its early days.³

1. Demons

The demon in Tobit is named Asmodeus, and is responsible for the death of seven husbands of Sarah, whom Tobit safely marries, because he is given a magic formula to put the demon to flight:

Touching the heart or the liver (of a fish), if a devil or an evil spirit trouble any, we must make a smoke thereof before the man or the woman, and the party shall be no more vexed. (Tob.6:7)

When thou shalt come into the marriage chamber, thou shalt take the ashes of perfume, and shalt lay upon them some of the heart and liver of the fish, and shalt make a smoke with it;

And the devil will flee away, and never come again any more; but when thou shalt come to her, rise up both of you, and pray to God which is merciful, who will have pity on you and save you. (Tob.6:16,17)

1. Charles, op. cit., p. 174, quoting Luther.

2. Pfeiffer, op. cit., pp. 274,275.

3. Charles, op. cit., p. 187.

2. Angels

The angel in Tobit is named Raphael. He guides Tobias on his long journey to Ecbatana, instructs him in the proper method of disposing of the demon, and even undertakes a special mission for him, to collect the money due his father. There is a touch of humor in the careful way that Tobit questions him to be sure he is a fit guide for his son! He does not disclose himself as an angel until they return safely to Nineveh and the time has come to pay his wages: "I am Raphael, one of the seven holy angels, which present the prayers of the saints, and which go in and out before the glory of the Holy One"(Tob.12:15). He gave as a characteristic of his angelic status that he neither ate nor drank while he was with him, but that Tobias seemed to see him sharing food with the rest of them (Tob.12:19).

The whole story illustrates the free, untutored, and vigorous type of speculation existent a little before the rise of Pharisaic regulations of the dogma. This belief in the angel's intervention, moreover, always remained essentially characteristic of the people's religion as opposed to that of the learned and cultured.¹

In the History of Susanna, there is a question about the activity of the angel. According to the Authorized Version, the Lord raised up the spirit of a young man whose name was Daniel, which could have been done without angelic mediation. The translation by Kay in the Charles edition of the Apocrypha reads, "there came an angel of the Lord, and as it had been commanded him, the angel bestowed a spirit of discernment upon a young man" (Sus.45).

Susanna is one of the additions to the book of Daniel in the Septuagint, so cannot be later than 100 B.C., and is possibly a half century earlier. It is fiction, "one of the first examples of a favorite modern literary form: the detective story." It is probably of pagan origin, told in Aramaic in the Persian period, and adopted with slight retouches by the Jews. The religious elements are distinctly Jewish. God is represented as close to the individual, sending his angel to rescue those in distress who pray to him.²

1. Charles, op. cit., p. 197.

2. Pfeiffer, op. cit., pp. 448,449,454.

Another Apocryphal addition to the book of Daniel is the Song of the Three Holy Children, who were thrown into the furnace by King Nebuchadnezzar for refusing to worship the golden image. According to the Biblical account, the king saw four men in the furnace, "and the appearance of the fourth is like a son of the gods" (Dan.3:25). The addition reads, "But the angel of the Lord came down into the furnace . . . and drove the flame of the fire out of the furnace" (Song of Three Ch., 26).

Bel and the Dragon, a third addition to Daniel, contains two stories of Daniel: he discovered the trick whereby the priests of Bel made it appear that the image ate the food set before it; and he killed the sacred dragon. The final incident recorded is the feeding of Daniel while he was in the lion's den. The angel of the Lord stopped Habakkuk as he was carrying food to the reapers and told him to take it to Daniel. When he said he had never been to Babylon and did not know where the den was, the angel took him by the hair of his head and carried him there; and when Daniel had eaten, he took him back to his own home. (Bel and Dr., 33-39).

In II Esdras, the angel stands by and interprets the visions in a way similar to the angel of Daniel, and of the New Testament book of Revelation, with which it has much in common. In II Esdras 4:1, the name of the angel is given as Uriel. But there are so many Christian interpolations in the book, and it is so obviously late, that although the Authorized Version places it with the Apocrypha, both Charles and Pfeiffer list it among the pseudepigraphical books.

In the Wisdom of Solomon, wisdom is so personified that it seems to be one of the angels:

And with thee is wisdom, which knoweth thy works,
 And was present when thou wast making the world,
 And which understandeth what is pleasing in thine eyes,
 And what is right according to thy commandments.
 Send her forth out of thy holy heavens,
 And from the throne of thy glory bid her come,
 That I may learn what is well-pleasing before thee.
 For she knoweth all things and hath understanding thereof,
 And in my doings she shall guide me in ways of soberness, . . .
 And so shall my words be acceptable. (Wis. Sol.9:9-12)

In I Esdras, it is Truth that is personified:

Great is truth, and stronger than all things. All the earth calleth upon truth, and the heaven blesseth her; all works shake and tremble, but with her is no unrighteous thing. . . . Truth abideth, and is strong for ever; she liveth and conquereth for evermore. With her there is no accepting of persons or rewards; but she doeth the things that are just. . . . She is the strength, and the kingdom, and the power, and the majesty, of all ages. (I Esd.4:35-40).

Both Wisdom and I Esdras were originally written in Greek, and probably belong to the period of the translation of the Septuagint. Both show some knowledge of Greek philosophy. Esdras is a Greek rewriting of the history of Israel from the time of Josiah until the re-establishment of the nation in Judea, a combination of Chronicles, Ezra, and Nehemiah, with additions.¹

E. The Jewish Doctrine of God

The name of God is not mentioned in I Maccabees, though the thought of God is apparent. Thus in I Mac.2:61, "none that put their trust in him shall be overcome" but there is no antecedent for that "him" although the meaning is unmistakable, for there is a list of people who were zealous for the law, kept the covenant, and were faithful in temptation.

This attitude was doubtless due to the influence of certain tendencies which were beginning to assert themselves. These centered around the Jewish doctrine of God. Just as there was a disinclination, on account of its transcendent holiness, to utter the name of God, and instead to substitute paraphrases for it, so there arose also a disinclination to ascribe action among men directly to God, because of His inexpressible majesty.²

It is the name of the Lord--unnamed!-- that is greatly praised:

Blessed art thou, God of our fathers, and blessed is thy name for ever and ever; let the heavens bless thee, and all thy creation to all the ages. (Tob.8:5)

1. Pfeiffer, op. cit., pp. 237, 326.

2. Charles, op. cit., p. 61.

1. Monotheism

The conception of God at this time is unquestionably monotheistic:

Save us, O God of all,
And cast thy fear upon all nations.
Shake thy hand against the strange people,
And let them see thy power;
As thou hast sanctified Thyself in us before them,
So glorify Thyself in them before us;
That they may know, as we also know,
That there is none other God but Thee.
(Ecclus.36:1-5)

And let them know that thou art the Lord, God, sole
and glorious over the whole world. . . .

Blessed art thou, O Lord, thou God of our fathers,
And to be praised and highly exalted for ever.
And blessed is thy glorious and holy name,
And to be highly praised and exalted for ever.
(Song of Three Ch., 22, 29, 30)

But though God was thought of as glorious with majesty, there is also the
trust in his care over them, and even the conception of God as Father:

He is our Lord, and he our God, and he our Father,
Yea, he is God to all ages. (Tob.13:4)

2. Judgment:

a. Punishment for Sin. God's providence includes guidance, which also
entails remedial punishment. The worst and final punishment is to be left
severely alone, as is the case with pagan nations.¹

For it is indeed a mark of great kindness when the
impious are not let alone for a long time, but punished at
once. In the case of other nations, the Sovereign Lord in
his forbearance refrains from punishing them till they have
filled up their sins to the full, but in our case he has
determined otherwise, that his vengeance may not fall on us
in after days when our sins have reached their height.
Wherefore he never withdraws his mercy from us; and though
he chasteneth his own people with calamity, he forsaketh
them not. (II Mac.6:13-16)

1. Charles, op. cit., p. 131.

National calamities are the result of sin:

How happeneth it, O Israel, that thou art in thine
 enemies' land,
 That thou art waxen old in a strange country,
 That thou art defiled with the dead,
 That thou art counted with them that go down to the grave?
 Thou hast forsaken the fountain of wisdom.
 For if thou hadst walked in the way of God,
 Thou shouldst have dwelled in peace forever.
 (Bar.3:10-13)

II Esdras speaks of the sorrow of the Lord over the sins of the people:
 "with sorrow and heaviness have I lost you" (2:3). While this is considered
 a very late work, the nucleus of that idea had been in the consciousness of
 the people for years: "I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked . . .
 why will ye die, O house of Israel?" (Ezek.33:11, K.J.V.).

Personal difficulties are of the same type as national calamities;
 they also are punishment for sin:

And now, O Lord, I am justly punished and deservedly
 afflicted:
 For lo! I am in captivity,
 Bowed down with many an iron chain,
 So that I cannot lift up my head by reason
 of my sins.
 Neither have I any respite:
 Because I provoked thy wrath, and did that which
 was evil in thy sight.
 (Prayer of Manasseh 9-11)

The Charles dating of this prayer-poem is about 300 A.D., though it is
 reckoned as definitely Jewish.¹ Dr. Pfeiffer, however, gives it a dating of
 250 B.C.² There is no mention of either captivity or repentance for Manasseh
 in the book of Kings, but Chronicles records his deportation to Babylon and
 such a prayer is referred to. His restoration to his throne would indicate
 sincere repentance, particularly with people who counted adversity always a
 judgment for sin (II Chr.33:11-13).

1. Charles, op. cit., p. 614.

2. Pfeiffer, op. cit., p. 459.

With great power comes great responsibility, and the judgment of God rests more heavily upon those from whom he has a right to expect much:

Hear, therefore, ye kings, and understand;
 Learn, ye judges of the ends of the earth: . . .
 For a stern judgment befalleth them that be in high places:
 For the man of low estate may be pardoned in mercy,
 But mighty men shall be searched out mightily.
 For the Sovereign Lord will not regard any man's person,
 Neither will he stand in awe of greatness;
 Because it is he that hath made both small and great,
 And alike he taketh thought for all;
 But strict is the scrutiny that cometh on the powerful.
 (Wis.Sol.6:1-8)

b. Rewards of the Righteous. As the judgment of God brought punishment upon evil doers, so also there were rewards for the faithful. Sometimes it sounds as though their trust was in their righteous works:

Do the good, and evil shall not find you. Better is prayer with truth and alms with righteousness than riches with unrighteousness; it is better to give alms than to lay up gold: almsgiving doth deliver from death, and it purges away all sin. They that do alms shall be fed with life.
 (Tob.12:8)

The righteousness of men is to Him as a signet,
 And the mercy of man He preserveth as the apple of an eye.
 Afterwards He will rise up and recompense them,
 And will visit their deeds upon their own heads.
 (Ecclus.17:22,23)

But the rewards of the righteous are also expressed in spiritual terms:

He that feareth the Lord is afraid of nothing,
 And doth not lose courage—for He is his hope.
 Of him that feareth the Lord—happy is the soul!
 On whom doth he trust? And who is his stay?
 The eyes of the Lord are upon them that fear Him,
 A mighty shield, and strong stay,
 A cover from scorching Sirocco,
 A shadow from noontide heat,
 A guard from stumbling,
 And a succor from falling,
 Heart-gladdener and eye-brightener,
 Healing, life, and blessing. (Ecclus.34:16-20)

These rewards were for the nation as well as for the individuals. When the temple was rededicated after the Maccabaeen victory, Simon, son of Onias, the High Priest, gave this benediction for the whole congregation:

Now bless the God of all
 Who doeth wondrously on earth,
 Who exalteth man from the womb
 And dwelleth with him according to his will.
 May he grant you wisdom of heart,
 And may there be peace among you.
 (Ecclus.50:22,23)

Israel, in captivity, is reminded of what might have been:

Hear, O Israel, the commandments of life:
 Give ear to understand wisdom. . . .
 For if thou hadst walked in the way of God,
 Thou shouldst have dwelled in peace for ever.
 Learn where is wisdom, where is strength,
 Where is understanding; that thou mayst know also
 Where is length of days, and life,
 Where is light of the eyes and peace.
 (Bar.3:9-14)

Absolute sincerity is demanded:

He who washeth after contact with a dead body and toucheth
 it again,
 What hath he gained by his bathing?
 So a man fasting for his sins
 And again doing the same—
 Who will listen to his prayer?
 And what hath he gained by his humiliation?
 (Ecclus.34:25,26)

Forgiveness is the sign of true repentance:

Forgive thy neighbor the injury done to thee
 And then when thou prayest thy sins will be forgiven.
 Man cherisheth anger against another,
 And doth he seek healing from God?
 On a man like himself he hath no mercy,
 And doth he make supplication for his own sins?
 He, being flesh, nourisheth wrath;
 Who will make atonement for his sins?
 (Ecclus.28:2-5)

There is sure blessedness for those who fear the Lord:

Ye that fear the Lord, wait for His mercy;
 And turn not aside lest ye fall.
 Ye that fear the Lord, put your trust in Him,
 He will not withhold your reward.
 Ye that fear the Lord, hope for His benefits,
 And for eternal gladness and mercy.
 Look at the generations of old and see,
 Who ever trusted in the Lord and was put to shame?
 Or who did abide in his fear and was forsaken?
 Or who did call upon Him, and He did not hear?
 For compassionate and merciful is the Lord,
 And He forgiveth sins, and saveth in time of affliction.
 (Ecclus.2:7-11)

But during the days of the Seleucid controversy, there was ample evidence that the just and righteous were being persecuted. After the final success of the Maccabaeen uprising, the joy of their return to power was short-lived. It was those who were bowing to Rome who were the prosperous ones. Even the priests in the Temple were there by Roman authority, and the great ideal of a theocratic nation seemed hopeless. So their hopes turned more definitely to another world and another life where righteousness would prosper. Visions which had been planted earlier began to grow and come into bud, though the full flower would wait for a later time.

F. Life After Death

1. In another World

The concept of life in another world after life on earth is over, had long been held, perhaps had always been held. It was a rather shadowy place to which one went, but there was a certain dignity attached to it, and there were other things worse than death:

Better death than a wretched life,
 And eternal rest than continual pain.
 (Ecclus.30:17)

Mourn for the dead, for his light hath failed; . . .
 Weep gently for the dead, for he hath found rest.
 (Ecclus.22:11)

Physical death is inevitable, and it is wise to be prepared:

Remember that death tarrieth not,
 Nor hath the decree of Sheol been told thee.
 Before thou diest do good to him that loveth thee,
 As thou hast prospered give to him. . . .
 Wilt thou not leave thy wealth to another?
 And thy labor to them that cast the lot?
 Give and take; yea, indulge thy soul,
 For in Sheol there is no delight.
 (Ecclus.14:12-16)

"Life and death are before man" (Ecclus.15:17), and according to the sage, the span of life was determined from the first:

God created man out of dust,
 And turned him back thereunto;
 He granted them a fixed number of days.
 (Ecclus.17:1)

The number of a man's days
 Is great if it reach an hundred years.
 As a drop of water from the sea, or as a grain of sand,
 So are man's few years in the eternal days.
 (Ecclus.18:9,10)

And from death there is no return:

But though a man can slay by his wickedness,
 Yet the spirit that is gone forth he bringeth not back,
 Neither giveth release to the soul that Hades hath received.
 (Wis.Sol.16:14)

Here there is a very definite contact with Greek teachings, for the soul is represented as having existed previously before coming to earth:

I was a good child by nature and a good soul fell to my lot;
 May, rather, being good, I came into a body undefiled.
 (Wis.Sol.8:19,20)

Dr. Holmes interprets Wis.Sol.5:13, "So we also, as soon as we were born, ceased to be" that the wicked are spiritually dead "and in the next world this miserable condition continues, only now they are conscious of their condition." ¹

1. Charles, Apocrypha, Int. to Wisdom by Solomon, by Dr. Holmes, p. 530.

In the early years Sheol, the place of life after death, was just a shadowy realm where all went regardless of life on earth. In the later time there was a definite division posited in that world, providing separate places for the wicked and the righteous. Thus in the Prayer of Manasses, he admits that he is "not worthy to behold and see the height of heaven," but prays that he should not be condemned "into the lowest parts of the earth." (9,12,K.J.V.) This would indicate that the separation was very great, which would be natural, from the early days when they thought of God as high up in the sky, and the burial of man was in the earth.

a. For the Wicked. The wicked may prosper in the world and seem to be enjoying all the blessings possible, but that is not the whole story: there is another life for him:

Pronounce no man happy before his death;
For by his latter end a man shall be known.
(Ecclus.11:28)

Apparently it is of the wicked only that the Son of Sirach speaks as dying; there is a better outlook for the righteous:

Turn unto the Lord and forsake sins; . . .
For what pleasure hath God in all that perish in Hades?
In place of those who live and give him praise?
Thanksgiving perisheth from the dead as from one that
is not. (Ecclus.17:26-28)

Wine is wicked, the king is wicked, all the children of
men are wicked, and such are all their wicked works; and
there is no truth in them; in their unrighteousness also
they shall perish. (I Esd.4:37)

Death is equated with darkness in Tobit 4:10. But the wicked were not always thought of as dead. Sometimes they are pictured as living forever and as suffering interminable torments:

How should he that is dust and ashes vaunt himself? . . .
Walking today and dead tomorrow!
When a man dieth he inheriteth
Worms and maggots, lice and creeping things.
(Ecclus.10:9-11)

b. For the Righteous. The lot of the righteous is a glorious one, to which they confidently look forward:

But the righteous live for ever,
And in the Lord is their reward,
And the care for them with the Most High.
Therefore shall they receive a glorious kingdom,
And a diadem of beauty from the Lord's hand;
Because with his right hand shall he cover them,
And with his arm shall he shield them.

(Wis.Sol.5:15,16)

If he is taken away in the vigor of life, this is not a sorrow, for he will escape many of the woes of earth:

But the righteous, though he die before his time, shall be
at rest.
(For honorable old age is not that which standeth in length
of time,
Nor is its measure given by number of years:
But understanding is gray hairs unto man,
And an unspotted life is ripe old age.)
Being found well-pleasing unto God, he was beloved of him,
And while living among sinners he was translated:
He was caught away lest wickedness should change his
understanding,
Or guile deceive his soul.

(Wis.Sol.4:7-11)

2. On Earth

a. The Kingdom of God. A return to Edenic days on earth had been the dream of more than one ancient Hebrew prophet, which was never entirely lost. There were times when they thought the fulfilment was imminent, only to be disappointed. Then the hope was transferred to a later day: sometimes to an everlasting kingdom on earth that would have God or an Anointed of God as the ruler; sometimes a temporary time of righteousness and peace on earth, to be followed by the everlasting joy of heaven. Both types of expectation can be found in the Apocryphal writings, although the distinctions are not always clear. It was this hope that sustained them through the long years of persecution and warfare, for they were a holy people, smiting "sinful men in their anger, and wicked men in their wrath" (I Mac.2:44).

Sometimes it would seem that they were expecting a Jewish National Kingdom with the capital in Jerusalem, but as they describe it, there are supernatural elements about it that lift it above the material idea:

I will exalt my God, and my soul shall rejoice in the King
of heaven;

Of his greatness let all men tell,
And let them give him thanks in Jerusalem.

O Jerusalem, thou holy city! he will chastise thee for the
works of thy hands,
And will again have mercy on the sons of the righteous.
Give thanks to the Lord with goodness, and bless the
everlasting King.

That thy tabernacle may be builded in thee again with joy,
And that he may make glad in thee all that are captives,
And love in thee all that are miserable and all the
generations of eternity.

A bright light shall shine unto all the ends of the earth;
Many nations shall come from afar,
And the inhabitants of the utmost ends of the earth
unto thy holy name;

With their gifts also in their hands unto the King of heaven,
Generations of generations shall utter rejoicing in thee,
And thy name that is elect unto the generations of
eternity. (Tob.13:7-11)

On his deathbed Tobit gave a similar prophecy:

God will again have mercy on them, and God will bring
them back into the land of Israel, and they will again
build the house, but not like the first, until the time
when the time of the seasons be fulfilled; and they will
return, all of them, from their captivity, and build up
Jerusalem with honor, and the house of God shall be builded
in her. And all the nations which are in the whole earth,
all shall turn and fear God truly, and all shall leave
their idols, who err after their false error. And they
shall bless the everlasting God in righteousness. All
the children of Israel that are delivered in those days
shall be gathered together and come to Jerusalem and
shall dwell forever in the land of Abraham with security,
and it shall be given over to them; and they that love
God in truth shall rejoice. (Tob.14:5-8)

While these might be regarded as national expectations in line with the old prophecies, and the "everlasting" life refer to the nation of Israel rather than to personal life, this prophecy is definitely supernatural:

Put off, O Jerusalem, the garment of thy mourning and affliction
And put on the comeliness of the glory that cometh from God for
ever.

Cast about thee the robe of the righteousness which cometh from
God;

Get a diadem on thine head of the glory of the Everlasting.

For God will show thy brightness unto every region under heaven.

For thy name shall be called of God for ever
The peace of righteousness, and the glory of godliness.

Arise, O Jerusalem, and stand upon the height,
And look about thee toward the east,

And behold thy children gathered from the going down of the sun
unto the rising thereof at the word of the Holy One,
Rejoicing that God hath remembered them.

For they went away from thee on foot,
Being led away of their enemies:

But God bringeth them in unto thee
Borne on high with glory as on a royal throne.

For God hath appointed that every high mountain, and the ever-
lasting hills, should be made low,
And the valleys filled up, to make plain the ground,
That Israel may go safely in the glory of God.

Moreover the woods and every sweet-smelling tree have over-
shadowed Israel by the commandment of God.

For God shall lead Israel with joy in the light of his glory
With the mercy and righteousness that cometh from him.

(Bar.5:1-9)

There is no distinctly Messianic passage in the Apocrypha. There is one reference to the righteous dead who will judge the nations, but whether this will be on earth or in heaven is not specifically stated:

They shall shine forth,
And like sparks among the stubble they shall run to and fro.
They shall judge nations and have dominion over peoples;
And the Lord shall reign over them for evermore.

(Wis.Sol.3:7,8)

b. Resurrection. If the Kingdom of God on earth is to include the righteous dead, there must be a resurrection. This is materialistically stated at the martyrdom of seven brothers and their mother for refusing to eat the "abominable swine's flesh." One of them cried out:

Thou cursed miscreant! Thou dost dispatch us from this life, but the King of the world shall raise us up who have died for his laws, and revive us to life everlasting.

The next brother also had his tongue and hands cut off, but said:

These I had from heaven; for His name's sake I count them naught; from Him I hope to get them back again.

So also the next brother:

'Tis meet for those who perish at men's hands to cherish hope divine that they shall be raised up by God again; but thou—thou shalt have no resurrection to life.

The mother thus exhorted the last of the brethren:

Fear not this butcher, but show thyself worthy of thy brothers, and accept thy death, that by God's mercy I may receive thee again together with thy brothers.
(II Mac.7:1-42)

It is not clear whether this meant life on earth or in heaven. The next use of the word seems definitely to refer to heaven. When Judas Maccabaeus ordered the bodies of men slain in battle brought to be buried "with their kinfolk in their fathers' sepulchers," it was found that each had an idol amulet:

All saw at once that this was why they had perished, and all . . . betook themselves to supplication, beseeching that the sin committed might be wholly blotted out. . . . (Judas) collected from them, man by man, the sum of two thousand drachmas of silver, which he forwarded to Jerusalem for a sin offering. In this he acted quite rightly and properly, bearing in mind the resurrection—for if he had not expected the fallen to rise again, it would have been superfluous and silly to pray for the dead—and having regard to the splendor of the gracious reward which is reserved for those who have fallen asleep in godliness—a holy and pious consideration! Hence he made propitiation for the dead, that they might be released from their sin.

(II Mac.12:40-45)

Prayer for the dead is a new idea here. In another passage there is a prayer for the prayers of the dead!

O Lord Almighty, thou God of Israel, hear now the prayer of the dead Israelites, and of the children of them which were sinners before thee, that hearkened not unto the voice of thee, their God, for which cause these plagues cleave unto us. Remember not the iniquities of our fathers; but remember thy power and thy name now at this time. (Bar.3:4,5)

Again there is presented the idea of prayer in the opposite direction: the saints in heaven praying for the people of earth. This came to Judas Maccabaeus in a vision:

Onias, the former high priest, a good and great man, of stately bearing yet gracious in manner, well-spoken and trained from childhood in all points of virtue-- Onias with outstretched hands invoking blessings on the whole body of the Jews; then another man in the same attitude, conspicuous by his grey hairs and splendor, and invested with marvelous, majestic dignity. This, Onias, explained to him, is the lover of the brethren, who prayeth fervently for the people and the holy city, Jeremiah, the prophet of God. (II Mac.15:10-14)

3. The Last Judgment

It was a tenet of Judaism that sin brings punishment and righteousness is rewarded, on earth. The obvious failure of the administration of such justice made a thought of a last judgment in heaven inevitable, and the coming of the "Day of the Lord" had been a specific teaching of some of the Old Testament prophets. This idea is found in two of the Apocryphal books:

For the mountains shall be moved from their foundations
with the waters,
And the rocks shall melt as wax at thy presence:
But thou art yet merciful to them that fear thee. . . .
Woe to the nations that rise up against my race:
The Lord Almighty will take vengeance on them in the
day of judgment,
To put fire and worms in their flesh;
And they shall weep and feel their pain forever.
(Jud.16:15,17)

The ungodly shall be requited even as they reasoned,
They which lightly regarded the righteous man, and
revolted from the Lord. . . .
For if they live long they shall be held of no account,
And at the last their old age shall be without honor.
And if they die early they shall have no hope,
Nor in the day of decision shall they have consolation.
(Wis.Sol.3:10,17-19)

G. Immortality

A life that began on earth and continued on into the next world, with death only the opening of the door into a larger life, was a concept foreign to Judaism. However, this thought is definitely presented in the Wisdom of Solomon, although it is difficult to be sure of the meaning, since Hebrew and Greek ideas of the future life are combined, though they are not always consistent, and the writer makes no attempt to make them so.

The vagueness and ambiguity of the language may be deliberate: perhaps the author realized that living men cannot pierce the mystery of their destiny after death. But since our author attempted to combine mutually exclusive Hebrew and Greek ideas about life after death, his thought was inevitably indefinite, if not actually inconsistent. . . .

In dealing with scientific and philosophical problems the author is a poet rather than a scientist.¹

There were many Greek philosophies. The author of Wisdom of Solomon followed those who thought the spirit within man eternal, but hampered by the body. He did not call the body evil, but it kept man from close touch with God, though God could reveal himself to man:

The thoughts of mortals are timorous,
And our devices are prone to fail.
For a corruptible body weigheth down the soul,
And the earthly frame lieth heavy on the mind. . . .
And who ever gained knowledge of thy counsel, except
 thou gavest wisdom,
And sentest thy holy spirit from on high? (Wis.Sol.9:14-17)

1. Pfeiffer, op. cit., p. 336.

He presents the belief that man's life is ended at death only to refute it:

For they said within themselves, reasoning not aright,
Short and sorrowful is our life;
And there is no remedy when a man cometh to his end,
And none was ever known that returned from Hades.
Because by mere chance were we born,
And hereafter we shall be as though we had never been;
Because the breath in our nostrils is smoke,
And reason is a spark kindled by the beating of our heart,
Which being extinguished, the body shall be turned into ashes,
And the spirit dispersed as thin air. . . .
And our life shall pass away as the traces of a cloud,
And shall be scattered as is a mist,
When it is chased by the beams of the sun,
And overcome by the heat thereof.
For our allotted time is the passing of a shadow,
And there is no putting back of our end;
Because it is fast sealed, and none reverseth it.
Come therefore and let us enjoy the good things that now are.

(Wis.Sol.2:1-6)

His refutation of this doctrine is clear:

Thus reasoned they, being far astray,
For their wickedness blinded them,
And they knew not the mysteries of God,
Neither hoped they for wages of holiness,
Nor did they judge that there is a prize for blameless souls.
Because God created man for immortality,
And made him to be an image of his own eternity.

(Wis.Sol.2:21-23, last verse K.J.V.)

To retain that immortality, man must know God (Wis.Sol.15:1-3).

Having disclosed to the afflicted pious and to the affluent ungodly a dazzling vision of eternal glory and a terrifying picture of the eternal torments of the wicked, our author must now . . . characterize for their benefit and for the guidance of enlightened Greeks, the way of salvation. . . . Immortality can be attained only by knowing God and doing his will. In these general terms the statement would have been accepted by a Pharisee; but our author's understanding of righteousness and knowledge of God was colored by Hellenistic notions.¹

1. Pfeiffer, op. cit., p. 342.

No more beautiful passage regarding life after death can be found anywhere than in the Wisdom of Solomon. This may have had a strong influence upon later thought, preparing the way for the full flower of the Christian outlook:

But the souls of the upright are in the hand of God,
And no torment can reach them.
In the eyes of foolish people they seem to die,
And their decease was thought an affliction,
And their departure from us their ruin,
But they are at peace.
For though in the sight of men they are punished,
Their hope is full of immortality,
And after being disciplined a little they will be
shown great kindness.
For God has tried them,
And found them worthy of himself.
He has tested them like gold in a furnace,
And accepted them like the sacrifice of a whole burnt
offering.
They will shine out when he visits them. . . .
And the Lord will reign over them forever.
(Wis.Sol.3:1-7, Goodspeed trans.)

CHAPTER XI

DOCUMENTS OF THE QUMRAN COMMUNITY

A. The Discovery

A "Phenomenal Discovery" was the heading of the article appearing in the May, 1948, issue of the Biblical Archaeologist, a quarterly publication of the American Schools of Oriental Research:

The most important discovery ever made in Old Testament manuscripts was officially announced on April 11 by Dr. Millar Burrows of Yale University, who during the past year has been Director of the American School of Oriental Research in Jerusalem. The entire Book of Isaiah in Hebrew was found on a well preserved scroll of parchment; and the date: first century B.C., says Dr. Burrows! This is amazing, for complete Hebrew manuscripts of Isaiah, or for that matter of any part of the Old Testament, have hitherto been unknown before the 9th Century A.D. One exception to this is a tiny fragment of Deuteronomy known as the Nash Papyrus; and it was this fragment which gave the clue to the date of the newly found manuscript.¹

This was only the beginning of wonders, the story of which has been told over and over again. Many other caves have been investigated since, some of which have yielded an immense number of fragments, but nothing as outstanding has been found as in this first cave, where there were eleven scrolls or fairly large parts of scrolls beside the fragments. Pottery found in the cave gave ceramic dating of the first or second century B.C. Most of this was in fragments due to the careless work of Bedouins, eager to sell the pieces. There was evidence of an original "library" of some forty jars, each containing five or six rolls. There were also in the cave some Roman lamps of a later period, which could be a validation of the old story that Origen had found manuscripts in a cave near Jericho.²

1. George E. Wright, Bibl. Arch. 11(1948), 21.

2. G. Lankester Harding, Curator of Antiquities, Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, Report, "Archaeological News and Views" Bib. Arch. 12(1949), 64.

Our attention is called to the very interesting fact that similar discoveries were made long ago in the same region of Palestine. Origen himself mentions the ancient discovery of Greek and Hebrew manuscripts found stored in jars in the region of Jericho. This transpired in the reign of Antonius, the son of Severus, called Caracalla (198-217 A.D.). One of these manuscripts, a Greek edition of the Psalms, apparently, was used by Origen in the preparation of his famous Hexapla.¹

Later excavations, as well as atomic and carbon tests, have confirmed the dates first estimated. Ruins of a monastery between the caves and the Dead Sea, located near a fresh-water spring known as Ain Feshkha, have brought to light the existence of a community formerly unknown. The site had had three periods of occupation. The first period, which was ended by an earthquake, was evidently during the late Hellenistic period, which could be dated by coins found in that level of the Seleucid King Antiochus VII (138-129 B.C.), John Hyrcanus (135-104 B.C.), and Alexander Jannaeus (103-76 B.C.). There were also coins of Herod the Great (37-4 B.C.), so the severe earthquake reported by Josephus in the seventh year of Herod was probably the one that destroyed the building. The next level shows that the monastery was rebuilt probably during the reign of Archelaus, and continued in use until the destruction of Jerusalem under Titus, in 70 A.D. It was in this level that a long table with a long bench beside it and inkwells with dried ink recognizable in them, were found, which pointed to the writing of manuscripts. Ashes and iron arrowheads show that this second period of occupation came to a violent end. In the third period of occupation the building was small, possibly occupied by a small Roman guard; after they left, there are indications that it was used for a short time by Jewish rebels, for thirteen coins of the second Jewish revolt, (132-135 A.D.), were found. This last occupation seems to have had no connection with the scrolls, which were probably secreted in the caves when the members of the community had to flee before the Roman soldiers.²

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1. Frank M. Cross, "The Newly Discovered Scrolls in the Hebrew University in Jerusalem," Bib. Arch. 12(1949), 38.
 2. Millar Burrows, The Dead Sea Scrolls (New York: The Viking Press, 1955) pp. 65-67.

B. The Sects of Judaism

There has been a great deal of speculation regarding the members of the Qumran Community, of whom nothing was known until the startling discovery of the scrolls. These gave new insight into ideas and ideals of a group of people living during the centuries immediately preceding the Christian era, which threw the whole period into new perspective. A study of the various known sects of Judaism has been made in an attempt to place this group.

1. The Pharisees

The Pharisees were the first organized party of Jewish laymen, who came into prominence during the reign of John Hyrcanus (135-105 B.C.). Their name means "separated" and probably refers to the expulsion of laymen from the Sanhedrin.¹ Their strong opposition to the Hellenizing elements that were gaining acceptance brought them into disfavor during the reign of Alexander Jannaeus, but they regained power later. They were a progressive group, not only in their reinterpretation of the law, but in all religious fields. They advocated the enlargement of the Scriptures by the admission of the Prophets (200 B.C.), and the Writings (90 A.D.), and fostered new rites and new festivals, as Hannukah and Purim. They were also responsible for speculations regarding wisdom, angels, and demons, and for the flowering of the Messianic hopes, and the belief in the resurrection of the body.² Josephus said of them, "they are supposed to excel all others in the accurate knowledge of the laws of the country."³

As for the Pharisees . . . they also believe that souls have immortal power in them, and that there will be under the earth rewards or punishments, according as men have lived virtuously or viciously in this life, and the latter souls are to be detained in an everlasting prison, but the former will have power to live again.⁴

1. George Herbert Box, "Pharisees," Ency. Brit. (1946), XVII, 689.

2. Pfeiffer, History of New Testament Times, p. 55.

3. Flavius Josephus, Life, I, 38, The Works of Flavius Josephus, Whiston's tr. ed., A. R. Shilleto (London: George Bell and Sons, 1898, 5 Vols.), I, 30.

4. Josephus, Antiquities of the Jews, XVIII, i, 3, op. cit., III, 266.

2. The Sadducees

The name "Sadducee" probably comes from Zadok, meaning Zadokite, or son or descendant of Zadok, which would signify that they belonged to the line of Aaron. Zadok was a direct descendant of Eleazar, the first high priest after Aaron (Num.20:26; I Chron.6:8). He was a priest during the reign of David and anointed Solomon king over Israel (II Sam.8:17; I Kings 1:44,45). The Sadducees belonged to the wealthy class, and were proud of their blood and position.¹ They were concerned chiefly with the administration and ritual of the temple, and were very conservative.²

The Sadducees, the second sect, take away fate entirely and suppose that God is not the cause of our doing or not doing what is bad, and they say that to do what is good or bad lies in men's own choice, and that the one or the other so belongs to every one, that they may act as they please. They also take away belief in immortality of the soul, and in punishments and rewards in Hades.³

3. The Essenes

There are many derivations suggested for the name "Essene" but none is sure. This seems to have been a general term applied to a variety of groups made up of both priests and laymen, probably a "branch of the Pharisees who conformed to the most rigid rules of levitical purity while aspiring to the highest degree of holiness."⁴ They were a monastic order of four thousand or more, living in various villages throughout Palestine. They practiced a community of goods and lived in strict discipline, particularly regarding the Sabbath observance. However, there was a measure of independence, and some differences among the groups. Most of them were celibate, but at least one group allowed marriage.⁵ Josephus was a novitiate for a time, but left before being received into full membership in the order. He thought very highly of them, and wrote more about them than of any others.

1. Pfeiffer, op. cit., p. 56.

2. Josephus, Antiquities, XX, ix, 1, op. cit., II, 405.

3. Josephus, Jewish Wars, II, ix, 14, ibid., IV, 157.

4. Herbert Martin James Leowe, "Essenes," Ency. Brit., VIII, 718.

5. Pfeiffer, ibid., pp. 56, 57.

The doctrine of the Essenes is that all things are left in the hand of God. They teach the immortality of souls, and think that the rewards of righteousness are to be earnestly striven for. And when they send what they have dedicated to God to the temple, they do not offer sacrifices, because they have more pure lustrations of their own; on which account they are excluded from the common court of the temple, and offer their sacrifices by themselves. But the course of their life is better than that of other men, and they entirely addict themselves to husbandry. It also deserves our admiration-how much they exceed in justice all other men that addict themselves to virtue. . . . This is shown by that institution of theirs, which will not suffer anything to hinder them from having all things in common, so that a rich man enjoys no more of his wealth than he who has nothing at all.¹

4. The Zealots

The Zealots were so named because they were "filled with zeal"² and were also known by the Aramaic form, "Cananean." As the Pharisees were the heirs of the Hasidim, so the Zealots were the heirs of the Maccabees. "Intolerant of foreign rule, they did not expect, like Daniel and the Pharisees, the kingdom of God miraculously from heaven, but endeavored to achieve it by fighting the Romans."³ One group among them was so fanatical and homicidal that they were known as the "Sicarii" or "Assassins". However, Josephus calls them a "fourth sect of Jewish philosophy":

Judas the Gallilean was the author of the fourth sect of Jewish philosophy. Its pupils agree in all other things with the Pharisaic notions, but they have an inviolable attachment to liberty, and say that God is their only ruler and lord. They also do not mind dying any kind of death.⁴

These are the four sects listed by Josephus. There were a number of minor sects: for example, the Talmud divides the Pharisees into seven kinds.⁵

1. Josephus, Antiquities, XVIII, i, 5, op. cit., III, 267.

2. Josephus, Jewish Wars, IV, iii, 9, ibid., IV, 307.

3. Pfeiffer, op. cit., pp. 36, 39.

4. Josephus, Antiquities, XVIII, i, 6, ibid., III, 268.

5. Jerusalem Berachoth, IX, 14, Ency. Dict., op. cit., VII, 3089.

C. The Members of the Qumran Community

It has been impossible as yet to make any definite identification of the Qumran community. One of the scrolls is a Manual of Discipline, which makes it possible to know how the group was organized, and some of the regulations of their living. The name they call themselves is apparently "sons of Zadok," but their Manual shows them to be very different from the Sadducees. It is suggested that they might have withdrawn from the Sadducees because they were more devout priests who wanted to signify their attachment to the original faith. If so, they later attracted the laymen into their group, which was composed of priests and laity. Some have thought them a group of the Pharisees, since among the Pharisees there were groups who were somewhat similar, of which the members were called rabbim, a name used in the Manual of Discipline. But the sect usually compared most closely with the Qumran group is the Essenes, for the scrolls were found in the part of the country where the Essenes were said to have had their headquarters.¹

1. The Manual of Discipline

The emphasis in the Manual of Discipline on entering into the covenant has made Covenanters an appropriate name for these people:

And all who come into the order of the community shall pass over into the covenant before God, to do all that he has commanded and not turn away from following him because of any dread or terror or trial or fright in the dominion of Belial. And when they pass into the covenant, the priests and Levites shall bless the God of salvation and all his works of truth; and all those who are passing into the covenant shall say after them, "Amen! Amen!"² (Manual of Discipline)²

There are two spirits in man, and he must be able to discern between them: the spirit of truth and the spirit of error. He must walk in the right way until "the time of his visitation."³

1. Burrows, op. cit., pp. 273-279.

2. Ibid., pp. 371, 372.

3. Ibid., p. 374.

In the abode of light are the origins of truth, and from the source of darkness are the origins of error. In the hand of the prince of lights is dominion over all sons of righteousness; in the ways of light they walk. And in the hand of the angel of darkness is all dominion over the sons of error; and in the ways of darkness they walk. . . . And all the spirits of his lot try to make the sons of light stumble; but the God of Israel and his angel of truth have helped all the sons of light. . . . One of the spirits God loves for all the ages of eternity; as for the other, he abhors its company, and all its ways he hates forever. (Man.Dis.)¹

Further, God, "in the mysteries of his understanding" has ordained a period for the ruin of error, and will destroy it forever. The world has "wallowed in the ways of wickedness" until that time of judgment. At that time God will "purify for himself the frame of man . . . for an eternal covenant."²

The next section of the Manual has to do with the rules of the order: rules for initiation, for eating, for dressing, for ablutions, for reading, for worship, and for discipline. By these rules the community is to be disciplined "until there shall come a prophet and the Messiahs of Aaron and Israel."³

The Manual closes with a beautiful Psalm, perhaps part of the ritual:

To those whom God has chosen . . .
he has given them an inheritance in the lot of the holy ones
and with the sons of heaven has associated their company
for a council of unity and a company of a holy building,
for an eternal planting
through every period that is to be.⁴

Dupont-Sommer says of the Manual: "This programme of religious and moral life in a remarkable way recalls on more than one point that to which the Essenes pledged themselves on oath." He refers not only to Josephus, but also to a similar Discipline from an Essene group in Damascus.⁵

1. Burrows, op. cit., p. 374.

2. Ibid., p. 376.

3. Ibid., p. 383.

4. Ibid., p. 388.

5. The Dead Sea Scrolls (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1956), p. 47.

2. The Damascus Document

In an old synagogue in Egypt in 1896 there was found a document which was published in 1910 under the title of "Fragments of a Zadokite Work." It proved to be a manual of discipline of a group in Damascus who have generally been considered one of the Essene groups. The document tells that there was a conflict between a reform party and the officiating priests in Jerusalem, so the minority group migrated to Damascus and formed their own organization. New interest has developed in this group because of the close connection between this document and the Manual of Discipline of the Qumran Covenanters. Outstanding likenesses are the use of the name, "Sons of Zadoc" and their emphasis on a new covenant. There are enough differences to show that the two were not identical,¹ which would agree with the words of Josephus about the Essenes, that there were many separate groups throughout the land of Palestine, each with its own organization.

The Damascus Document opens with a brief history of Israel, with special emphasis on the fact that every disaster that came upon them was punishment for sin: "for all who walk in these things in perfection of holiness, according to all his teaching, God's covenant stands fast, to make them live to a thousand generations." Of course their own community was composed of the righteous ones, and of their leader they said, "The star is the interpreter of the law who came to Damascus, as it is written, 'A star shall come forth out of Jacob, and a sceptre shall rise out of Israel.'" They were sure that the prophecy of Balaam (Num.24:17), would be fulfilled through their own group, but the "sceptre" was yet to come. First there would be a period of warfare for about forty years, which would be a time of terrible destruction of the wicked, when the Lord would pour out his wrath on all the princes of Judah. But all who hold "these ordinances" would be saved—"they shall rejoice and be glad, and their hearts shall be strong, and they shall prevail over all the sons of the world."²

1. William H. Brownlee, "A Comparison of the Covenanters of the Dead Sea Scrolls with Pre-Christian Jewish Sects," Bib. Arch. 13(1950), 50.

2. Burrows, op. cit., pp. 354-358.

The "Community Regulations" which make up the next part of the Document are very similar to those of the Manual of Discipline of the Qumran group. They concern discipline and judges to administer it, Sabbath observance, and offerings, with the arrangement that there must be a priest for every ten men. These ordinances are to be followed "until arises the Messiah of Aaron and Israel." Reference for the times is made to the "Book of the Divisions of Times according to their Jubilees and in their Weeks"--undoubtedly the Book of Jubilees of the pseudepigraphical writings.¹

D. Excerpts from the Qumran Scrolls

1. The Habakkuk Commentary

One of the most interesting documents is the Habakkuk Commentary, which in plan is very like the commentaries of the present day, in that a verse of the prophecy is given and then the interpretation. There is no distinction in script, however, between prophecy and commentary, but only a space in the line between sections.² Only two of the three chapters in Habakkuk's prophecy are considered. Many critics think the last chapter is a late addition, with which this treatment would seem to agree.

The prophecy of Habakkuk is approached from an allegorical point of view, with the thought that all the references there are not meant historically, but prophetically, and point to their own times: thus the Chaldeans are "Kittim," valuable for dating except that critics differ on the meaning of "Kittim."

Indeed, the author did not trouble about an objective interpretation; his exegesis is purely and entirely allegorical. All the biblical sentences are considered by him as "symbols" and, consequently, are violently transposed to a new historical and theological plane. This is the way the Neo-Pythagoreans proceeded with regard to the Homeric texts.²

1. Burrows, *op. cit.*, pp. 358-364.

2. Burrows and Others, ed., *The Dead Sea Scrolls of St. Mark's Monastery* (New Haven: The American Schools of Oriental Research, 1950), Photographic Plates LV-LXI.

3. Dupont-Sommers, *op. cit.*, pp. 25, 26.

(Chapter 1:4) Look among the nations, and see; Wonder and be astounded. For I am doing a work in your days that you would not believe if it were told. This means those who acted treacherously together with the man of the lie. . . . And truly the saying refers to those who will act treacherously at the end of days: that is, those who are ruthless against the covenant, who do not believe when they hear all the things that are coming upon the last generation from the mouth of the priest into whose heart God put wisdom to explain all the words of his servants the prophets.

(Chapter 3:3) And the Lord answered me and said, "Write the vision and make it plain upon the tablets, so that he may run who reads it. And God told Habakkuk to write the things that were to come upon the last generation, but the consummation of the period he did not make known to him. And as for what it says, that he may run who reads it, this means the teacher of righteousness to whom God made known all the mysteries of the words of his servants the prophets.

(3) For still the vision is for an appointed time. . . . If it tarries, wait for it, for it will surely come; it will not delay. This means the men of truth, the doers of the law, whose hands do not grow slack from the service of the truth, when the last period is stretched out over them. For all the periods of God will come to their fixed term as he decreed for them in the mysteries of his wisdom.

(10) You have devised shame to your house by cutting off many peoples; and you sin against yourself. This means it is the house of judgment, of which God will set the judgment in the midst of many peoples; and thence he will bring it up for judgment, and in their midst will condemn it and punish it with fire of brimstone.

(19) Woe to him who says to a wooden thing, Awake; to a dumb stone, Arise! . . . But the LORD is in his holy temple; let all the earth keep silence before him! This means all the nations who worship stone and wood; and in the day of judgment God will destroy all the worshipers of idols and the wicked from the earth.¹

The word here translated LORD in the biblical text is the "tetragram" or "four letters," the four consonants of the holy name, JAHWEH, written in an antique script so that it stands out from the rest.²

1. Burrows, op. cit., pp. 365-370.

2. Burrows, ed., op. cit., Plates LVII, LX.

2. The War of the Sons of Light with the Sons of Darkness.

Dr. Dupont-Sommer considers this document not an apocalypse, with a description of the great battle at the end of time, but a statement of the manner in which the pious Jews ought to conduct warfare against their pagan neighbors: Edomites, Moabites, Ammonites and Philistines, who have joined with the Kittim of Asshur and the Kittim of Egypt. He thinks that the Kittim here refer to the Seleucids and the Ptolemies who were their overlords and oppressors, while the same word is used in the Habakkuk Commentary for the Romans. But even if this is not apocalyptic, it is mystical, for the battles are the Lord's: "It is an ideal making of rules, and utopian in character, but at least it reveals with what rigorous devotion the "pious" ¹ in the Maccabaeen age supposed that the battles of God should be carried on."

This may not be an eschatological battle carried on in the heavens, but it certainly is looking toward the Kingdom of God on earth. The legions of the pious are going forth to conquer, one after another, all the kingdoms of the world, a year being designated for each of them. The war will be of thirty-five years duration, six years ridding the homeland of oppressors, and twenty-nine years going out into other countries to conquer: Mesopotamia, Lud, Syria, Uz, Hul, Togar, Mashsha, Arpachshad, Assyria and Persia, Elam, Ishmael and Keturah; then a final ten years against all the sons of Ham. (Col.2, ls 1-13). Their standards in battle will bear such names as "The Called of God," "The Truth of God," "The Glory of God," "The Right Hand of God," "The Vengeance of God," "The Victory of God." (Cols. 3,4). The order of battle sounds more like pageantry than warfare: ²

There shall go forth . . . seven priests of the sons of Aaron wearing garments of fine twined linen, blue and purple and scarlet stuff . . . garments of war, not to be brought into the sanctuary. One priest shall go before the men of rank to strengthen their hands in the battle; and in the hands of the other six shall be trumpets of assembly . . . and with them shall go seven Levites ² holding in their hands the seven ram's horns of Jubilee. ²
(Col. vii, ls. 10-15)

1. Dupont-Sommer, op. cit., p. 80.
2. Burrows, op. cit., pp. 391-395.

On the other hand, Dr. Burrows leaves the eschatological matter an open question to which no final answer can be given. He cites a fragment found in the first cave in 1949, part of an unknown apocalyptic poem, promising sure victory of light over darkness, and the final imprisonment of the wicked angels.¹ With this the War document has a readily-recognized affinity:

Today is (God's) appointed time to lay low and make fall the prince of the dominion of wickedness; and he will send eternal help to the lot he has redeemed by the power of the angel he has made glorious for rule, Michael, in eternal light, to give light in joy to all Israel, peace and blessing to the lot of God, to exalt among the gods the rule of Michael and the dominion of Israel over all flesh. Righteousness shall rejoice in the high places, and all the sons of truth shall be joyful in eternal knowledge. And you, sons of his covenant, be strong in the crucible of God until he waves his hand and fills his crucibles with his mysteries that you may stand.

(Col.xvii, 1s.5-9)²

3. The Lamech Scroll

Among the scrolls found in the first Dead Sea cave there was one that was written in Aramaic, but it was in such bad condition that it could not be unrolled easily. "In places the leather has solidified into a kind of natural glue." But a few scraps had fallen off, one large enough to contain almost a whole column. Here the word Lamech gave it the name by which it is known. Very recently the scroll has been successfully unrolled, and has proved to be a collection of folk tales. One of these tells that at the birth of Noah, he began to talk immediately and his eyes flashed light!³

The Jews were accustomed to write "haggadoth" or stories confessedly fictitious, but containing a didactic as well as amusing element concerning scriptural characters, incidents, or texts. They are extant in great numbers.⁴

1. Burrows, op. cit., p. 27.

2. Ibid., p. 399.

3. News Item, Together (Magazine of The Methodist Church) 1(1956)4, p. 65.

4. James DeQuincey Donehoo, The Apocryphal and Legendary Life of Christ (New York: George H. Doran Company, 1911), Introduction, p. xix.

4. The Thanksgiving Psalms

The hymns in the collection known as the Thanksgiving Psalms have many similarities to the later Psalms in the Old Testament. "The Psalmist's spirit has been nourished and saturated with reading the sacred books, and the quotations shine out at every moment like so many precious stones drawn lavishly from the treasure of inspired Scriptures."¹ Many are apocalyptic:

I thank thee O Lord,
because thou hast redeemed my soul from the pit;
from the Sheol of Abaddon
thou hast brought me up to an eternal height,
and I walk in an unsearchable plain.
I know that there is hope
for him whom thou hast formed from the dust
for an eternal company. (iii:19-36)

Those who please thee will stand before thee forever;
those who walk in the way of thy heart will be established
to eternity. . . .

a man's way is not established
except by the spirit which God created for him,
to make a blameless way for the sons of man,
that they might know all his works
in the might of his power and the greatness of his mercy
to all the sons of his good pleasure. (iv:8-37)

For what is man?
a cut-off bit of clay, and to dust is his return,
but of thy true counsel thou wilt give him knowledge.
But I am dust and ashes.
What can I plan unless thou hast desired it?
And what can I think apart from thy will? (x:3-14)

I thank thee, O Lord, because thou hast done wondrously
with dust; . . .
With a thing formed of clay thou hast done powerfully. . . .
For thy glory's sake thou hast cleansed man from transgression
to consecrate himself to thee,
from all unclean abominations and guilt of unfaithfulness;
to unite himself with the sons of thy truth
and to be in the same lot with thy holiness. (xi:3-12)

1. Dupont-Sommer, op. cit., p. 69.

2. Burrows, op. cit., pp. 400-415

E. The Theology of the Qumran Group

There has been a great difference of opinion as to where this Qumran group belonged, what affinities they had with current schools of thought, what influences were back of them. Some have thought, because of the emphasis upon the revelation of knowledge, that there was some connection with the Gnostics—not with the extreme Gnostics of a later era, but with the early general Gnosticism.¹ And undoubtedly there is such emphasis here:

Thine, O thou who art the God of Knowledge,
are all works of righteousness, the counsel of truth.
(Psa.Col.1,ln.6)

I thank thee, O Lord, because thou hast made me wise
in thy truth
And in thy wondrous mysteries hast given me knowledge.
(Psa.Col.xii,ln.26)²

The spirit of light and the spirit of darkness may have some affinity with Gnosticism, but the emphasis on angels, both good and bad, would suggest closer connection with Zoroastrianism, which was long recognized in Judaism.³ Again, the emphasis on "mysteries" found in most of the documents might show a contact with the "mystery religions" with which they were surrounded, which were the religions of most of their pagan neighbors. But Dr. Burrows points out that whatever foreign ideas may have affected these people, their basic point of view and major doctrines were thoroughly Jewish, derived principally from the Old Testament.⁴

That these people were progressive thinkers is shown by the study of the many fragments found in the caves. A large room in the basement of the Palestine Museum in Jerusalem is given over to the study of these fragments, which are so numerous and so difficult to place that it has been estimated that there is work ahead for fifty years. Parts of every book of the Old Testament except Esther have been found, several different manuscripts of some of them;

1. Burrows, op. cit., pp. 252, 253.

2. Burrows, op. cit., pp. 400, 410.

3. Ibid., p. 259.

4. Ibid., p. 262.

there are also many of the apocryphal and pseudepigraphical works, some of which there was nothing known except a few quotations made by later writers. Many of these books are apocalyptic in the extreme. That they were included in their library shows some sympathy toward that thought, as has been seen in some of their own writings. According to Dr. Burrows, their documents are not apocalyptic in any strict sense, but "there is a strong interest in the 'last days' which shows a spiritual connection with apocalyptic literature and encourages a search for indications of literary relationship."¹

That they were looking for a personal Messiah is evident. In the Manual of Discipline there are two Messiahs, a priest and a king, "the Messiahs of Aaron and Israel."² "Messiah" is the anglicized form of the Hebrew word for "anointed" and is clearly used in several passages of these documents to refer to one who is to come at the end of the present age. An interesting reading in the Isaiah Scroll makes clear the thought that the Suffering Servant of Isaiah is truly the Messiah:

I so anointed his appearance beyond any one (else)
and his form beyond that of (other) sons of men--
So shall he sprinkle many nations because of himself.
(Isa.52:14,15)

Dr. Brownlee suggests that this not only emphasizes the Messianic aspect of the passage, but also gives a more plausible meaning to the word "sprinkle."³

Just a few passages have been taken for reference from the riches of the documents. These have been chosen largely for their references to the last things, the judgment and power of God, and the apocalyptic note in general with which this study is concerned. It shows the trend of a certain group in Judaism during the Inter-Testamental period.

1. Burrows, op. cit., p. 220.

2. Ibid., p. 383.

3. William H. Brownlee, "The Servant of the Lord in the Qumran Scrolls," Bulletin, A.S.O.R., 132(1953), 10.

CHAPTER XII

RELIGIONS OF THE GRAECO-ROMAN WORLD

A. The Spirit of the Times

The period during which the Apocryphal books were being written was a time of spiritual unrest throughout the world. The conquest of Alexander the Great had opened the roads of the world. Grecian culture was being carried to the ends of the earth, but also the ideas of those far places were making inroads on Graeco-Roman thought. Everywhere there was a sincere desire to know more about life, particularly the life after death, to know what the next world would be like, what kind of beings were to be found there, and how to insure one's safe conduct to the better part of that strange place. This was so universal that it must have been a natural development of mankind.¹

B. Homer and Hesiod

It was Homer and Hesiod, according to Herodotus, who "made a theogony" for the Greeks, but the gods of Mount Olympus had been honored for years before then. Homer had but written the folk-tales into his great epics, and Hesiod had set forth a "genealogy of the gods" as they had long been known, "an early record of men's groping about the roots of mystery."²

Many stories of outrageous immorality among the gods must have come down from utterly savage forefathers. These uncanny heirlooms were never definitely discarded in pagan Greece. Some of the worst accounts of Divine wickedness were so entangled with beautiful and well-beloved myths that they have become immortalized in the drama, in lyrics, in works of plastic art, and cannot be ignored in any view of Greek life and thought.³

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1. Shirley Jackson Case, Experience with the Supernatural in Early Christian Times (New York: The Century Company, 1929), p. 1.
 2. "Hesiod"—unsigned, Library of the World's Best Literature, XIII, 7327.
 3. Ibid., p. 7328.

C. Greek Philosophers

1. Heraclitus, 535-475 B.C.

Heraclitus was the most original of the pré-Socratic Greek philosophers, and had a very great influence on all succeeding schools of thought. He was the first to use the word Logos, from which the science of Logic is named, and on which the first principle of Stoicism was built. He considered it, however, as one with universal fire. He thought that everything in the universe was undergoing perpetual change except this Logos, or fire, which was the underlying cause of all.¹

Though the LOGOS always speaks, yet men are born without understanding, both before they hear it, and after they have heard it. For though all things are produced according to this LOGOS, men seem to be unaware of it.

This world, which is the same for all, neither any god nor any man made; but it was always, is, and ever shall be, an everliving fire.

God is day and night, winter and summer, war and peace, surfeit and famine. He changeth as fire when it is mingled with spices, and is named as each man listeth.

Immortals are mortal and mortals immortal, living each other's death, and dying each other's life.

The bounds of the soul thou shalt not find, though thou travel every way.

Though the LOGOS is universal, most men live as if each had a wisdom of his own.²

2. Socrates and Plato, circa 469-348 B.C.

Four hundred years before the Christian era Socrates had been put to death for regarding the tales of the gods as an "invention of the poets," foolish and often immoral. As the years passed, however, the influence of Socrates, as received through the writings of Plato, was strongly felt.³

1. Stewart Dingwell Forbes Salmon, "Logos," Ency. Brit., (1946), XIV, 334.

2. Heraclitus, "Fragments," trans. unnamed, Lib. World's Lit., XIII, 7247-7251.

3. Albert Edward Taylor, "Socrates," Ency. Brit. (1946), XX, 915.

In the discussions reported by Plato, Socrates is seen as a man of deep piety with no fear of death. Cebes cringed before death as a "hobgoblin," and thought that when the soul left the body the wind would blow it away, and that there was greater danger in stormy weather. Socrates said that death was a "release for the soul from the chains of the body, giving it opportunity to know the absolute in truth and beauty."¹ He said that the ghostly apparitions that prowl around tombs (he recognized that there were such!) were evil ones, compelled to wander in penalty for their evil ways of life. He believed in transmigration of souls through many cycles of rebirth:

Men who have followed after gluttony, and wantonness, and drunkenness, and have no thought of avoiding them, would pass into asses and animals of that sort. . . . Those who have chosen the portion of injustice, and tyranny, and violence, will pass into wolves, or hawks, and kites. . . . Those who have practiced the civil and social virtues which are called temperance and justice . . . may be expected to pass into some gentle, social nature which is like their own, such as that of bees or ants, or even back into the form of man. . . . He who is a philosopher or lover of learning, and is entirely pure at departing, is alone permitted to reach the gods.

The lovers of knowledge are conscious that their souls . . . are simply fastened and glued to their bodies. ²

Socrates explained at length about the processes of judgment in the next world: those who have lived well are taken to the Acherusan Lake and there washed and purified of any evil, then given rewards for the good they have done. Some are incurably evil and are hurled into Tartarus, but others have committed crimes, great but not unpardonable. These are sent to Tartarus for a year, then confronted with those whom they have wronged. If these have mercy on them, they are received into the Elysian fields; if not, they return to Tartarus year after year until they are finally forgiven by those whom they have harmed. Those who have led holy lives "go directly to their pure homes which are above, and dwell there in fair mansions."³

1. Plato, "Phaedo," trans. Benjamin Jowett, Harvard Classics, II, 69.

2. Ibid., pp. 74-76.

3. Ibid., pp. 110.

3. Diogenes, 412-323 B.C.

Another group of philosophers known as Cynics, named from Cynosarges, the place of their birth, was founded by Antisthenes. They were distinguished for their "morose and snarling ethics, and their ostentatious contempt of the ordinary pleasures of life." The word "cynical" comes from them and suggests their philosophy.¹ Diogenes was a leader of this school, and while the story of his carrying a lantern through the city streets in the daytime, searching for an honest man, is no doubt pure myth, it indicates somewhat his "cynical" philosophy. He taught that most men are sick as of a pestilence in their false beliefs about the world. His philosophy has been given in a quatrain:

There is nothing to fear in God;
There is nothing to feel in death;
Good can be attained;
Evil can be endured. 2

4. Aristotle, 386-322 B.C.

Instead of trying to combine the Ideal and the Real into the Oversoul, Aristotle opposed the existence of Ideas apart from the world. Ideas are in the world, a part of Reality. As the oak is in the acorn, so the idea is the potential realized. Reality is a process of development, and at the end of a long series of growth is the pure form, the pure Idea. God is absolute Spirit with no touch of the material. His is the life of pure thought. He is the mover of the universe, but is himself unmoved: "the Unmoved Mover." God is "the final end of all, the ideal toward which the whole creation moves by an inner necessity." The good and the beautiful incite men to try to realize them, not by anything they do, but by the appeal they make to men as ideals to be realized. As the teacher of Alexander the Great, Aristotle's influence was far-reaching.³

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1. "Cynics," Standard Encyclopedia of the World's Knowledge (New York: Funk & Wagnalls Company, undated, 25 Vols.) VIII, 275.
 2. Gilbert Murray, Five Stages of Greek Religion (Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1925), p. 204.
 3. Arthur Kenyon Rogers, A Student's History of Philosophy (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1920), pp. 106, 107.

5. Pyrrho, 365-275 B.C.

Pyrrho was the founder of a school known as the Sceptics, from which the English word "sceptic" comes; but the English meaning of a doubter who really believes nothing is not quite fair to that group of philosophers. However, they were able to see both sides of a question so thoroughly that they felt that perception was incapable of establishing truth; and since they were able to think through this situation, they also felt that thought could not bring truth either. They spent much time in trying to establish a criterion of truth. "Unless we go on forever establishing one truth by another, we are compelled to find somewhere a starting point that is absolutely certain in itself." But they never did find any such criterion. They could point out flaws in the reasoning of all other philosophers, but were never able to reach the Absolute themselves. They were noted for convincing oratory, but could often speak equally well on both sides of any question. Scepticism was too negative to satisfy many people, but the sceptical spirit had lasting and strong influence.¹

6. Zeno, 340-265 B.C.

Zeno was at first a cynic, but their teaching was a little too harsh for him, so he separated from them and founded his own school of philosophy, known as Stoicism, named for the "stoa" where he taught. This was a colonaded porch in the Agora at Athens, decorated with paintings of the Trojan war. His ideal was to "live in conformity with the divine order of the universe." He taught that one should take life whole, the evil with the good.² In fact, the Stoics emphasized the acceptance of evil to such an extent that "stoical" has come into the English language to mean "not easily excitable or disturbed; being indifferent, or pretending indifference to pleasure or pain." Pleasures and pains to the body were counted worthless and to be despised; only those of the mind should be given any attention.³

1. Rogers, op. cit., pp. 160, 161.

2. Robert Drew Hicks, "Stoics," Ency. Brit., XXI, 428.

3. Am. Ency. Dict., "Stoic," IX, 3867.

The Stoics, however, were not indifferent to the old Greek gods. They knew that the people loved them and found sufficient satisfaction in them not to be willing to give them up. They satisfied their emotional cravings. So the Stoics found a way to accept them by means of allegory. The people craved both philosophy and poetry, and "if the two spoke like enemies, then their opposition must needs be explained away by one who loved them both."¹ Their use of this allegory "made Homer a text of up-to-date philosophy, and the Homeric poems a Greek Bible."² Thus, strong Hephaestus at his forge, beating out thunderbolts for Zeus, was the first smith ever known, who truly must have seemed a god as he discovered that which was to change the very fabric of man's life, forging metals to serve man's needs. The Bible simply says, "Tubalcain, the forger of all instruments of bronze and iron" (Gen.4:21). In the Babylonian tongue the name of this Cain is "Smith"! ³

However, while some of this allegorizing of the Stoics appealed to the common people, there was another part of their philosophy that dealt in abstractions. They used the teachings of Plato with mysterious emphasis on the divine element in man, equipped with wings for heavenly flight. They spoke of the great "Power of the Universe and the Ordering Mind." They were materialists even so, for with them the soul was the breath of man, and a part of the world soul, which made a strange combination of idealism with materialism.⁴ They tried to bring the Ideal of Plato down to earth:

By its very nature the Eros, through which Socrates wishes to dissolve the ego in the vision of Absolute Beauty, can be but the privilege of the few. It contains the idea of universality in that it perceives beauty, or form, "everywhere" but only the chosen ones can attain this ideal. The Socratic Eros cannot serve as the spring of salvation and inspiration from which the humble can drink. ⁵

1. Murray, op. cit., p. 202.

2. Samuel Angus, The Religious Quests of the Greco-Roman World (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1929), p. 107.

3. Pfeiffer, Class Lectures, "Oriental Backgrounds," from Stenographic Notes, April 17, 1939, Boston University School of Theology.

4. Rogers, op. cit., p. 137-139.

5. Ulich, The Human Career, p. 8.

7. Epicurus, 341-370 B.C.

Epicurus established another school of Philosophy known by his name, noted for the pursuit of "pleasure"—but their definition of pleasure was very different from any popular conception: "freedom of the body from pain, and the soul from anxiety." The life he led was one of greatest temperance and simplicity, and over the gate to the garden in which he taught were the words: "For those who enter here, no better fare than barley-cake and water."¹ This is very different from the modern way of speaking of "Epicurean delights." He is also accused of not believing in the gods, but that is true only in a limited sense: "There is no profanity in refusing to believe in the gods of the people: the profanity is in believing of the gods what the people believe of them."² He insisted that the gods were not such as were commonly supposed, but were fashioned of finer stuff than men, and dwelt far off in intermundial space.³ Life should be lived at its best on earth:

That doctrine of Epicurus that denied the Providence of God was no Atheism, but a magnificent and high-strained conceit of His Majesty, which he deemed too sublime to mind the trivial actions of those inferior Creatures.⁴

D. Mystery Religions

Side by side with these rationalizing tendencies went a renewed interest in the supernatural, cravings for assurance of life's meaning. A revival of mystery religions was the result. Mystery chapels unearthed in many of the Greek and Roman provinces witness to the prevalence of the cults.⁵ The old agricultural religions were really mystery religions, "the spontaneous and unconscious outcome of primitive religious needs, ancient as human thought."⁶

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1. "Epicurus," Funk and Wagnalls Stand. Ency., X, 140.
 2. Francis Bacon, "On Atheism," Harvard Classics, III, 45.
 3. Alexander W. Mair, "Epicurus," Ency. Brit. (1946), VIII, 648.
 4. Sir Thomas Browne, "Religio Medici," Harvard Classics, III, 285.
 5. Harold Willoughby, Pagan Regeneration (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1929), p. 36.
 6. Vittorio D. Macchiolo, From Orpheus to Paul (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1929, 2 Vols.), I, 3.

That these ancient mystery religions persisted, and were even clothed in modern dress, is a sign that they brought a certain satisfaction to the religious needs of the people.

The mystery religions were systems of gnosis akin to and forming a stage to those movements to which the name of gnosticism became attached. They professed to satisfy the desire for knowledge of God. . . . The mysteries brought men into contact with that god "who wishes to be known and is known to his own."¹

The rites of the mysteries were many and various, based upon the myths surrounding the gods worshiped, and were frequently presented in dramatic form, though they were shrouded in secrecy, and little is known of those forms. Their expectations, as they entered into their special holy rites, were communion and fellowship, in which they felt the presence of the god, even leading to the extreme impression of a "beatific vision"; in some cases there was the further feeling of absolute identification with the god. There were a variety of ways in which the presence of the deity was manifested, or the realization of the presence induced. Individual ecstasies and collective enthusiasms were induced by vigil, fasting, whirling dances, wine, perfume, flagellation, concentrated contemplation of sacred objects, darkness, music—all of which led to hallucinations and other forms of psychic excitement. This was considered a "divine frenzy" and it was the belief that the insane were particularly visited by the gods, that to be "out of one's mind" was to enter into the divine.² That they accomplished what they desired must be recognized, otherwise the many mystery cults would not have persisted so long. Today, however, the devotees would be considered psychopathic cases and their moods of exhilaration as hallucinations, not inspirations! Much of this was "magic" but "the testimonies that have come from a few who found spiritual satisfaction make it necessary to view it with respect at least."³

1. Samuel Angus, The Mystery Religions and Christianity (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1925), p. 52.

2. Ibid., p. 100.

3. Macchioro, op. cit., p. 20.

1. The Eleusinian Mysteries

The oldest of the mysteries performed in Greece was that annually portrayed at Eleusis. The mythological background is the story of Demeter, the sorrowing mother, whose daughter, Kore, has been stolen by Pluto, the god of the underworld. Demeter came to Eleusis grieving for her daughter, and stayed there nine days, fasting, after which she went out to seek Kore. She finally accomplished the return of her daughter for a part of the time each year, which of course signified the sleep of winter while Kore was in the underworld, and the new life in the spring, on her return to earth. In the enactment of the drama, the story was followed carefully, so began with a nine days fast. All but the last rite was performed publicly, so more is known about this mystery than most of the others. The story was dramatized with music and choral dancing of grace and beauty.¹ Following the fast, there was a torchlight procession, to typify Demeter's search for Kore. Although this was at night, there was nothing orgiastic about it, but it was carried out beautifully with dignified pageantry. Next morning there was a bath or baptism in the salt water of the sea, then the sacrifice of a pig, with some sort of baptism by sprinkling with its blood. This made the worshipers ceremonially clean, and ready to take part in the final secret rites. These are unknown, for it was a religious, civil, and political crime to disclose them, and the secret was kept. From somewhere has come the word that it included a marriage that was pure symbolism: the two representing the gods entered into darkness for a few minutes, and emerged bearing a reaped ear of corn as the fruit of the divine union. This would link the Eleusinian rites with other agricultural mysteries. The devotees received assurance of their fellowship with the powers that govern life beyond the grave, and the hope of immortality.² Greek archaeologists have excavated the site of these old ceremonies at Eleusis, but found nothing to unlock the secret mystery.³

1. Harry Angus Alexander Kennedy, St. Paul and the Mystery Religions (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1913), pp. 13,14.

2. Frazer, The Golden Bough, p. 145.

3. R. V. D. Magoffin and Emily C. Davis, The Romance of Archaeology (Garden City, New York: Garden City Publishing Company, Inc., 1929), p. 119.

2. The Dionysian Mysteries

The Eleusinian mysteries were too dignified a presentation for some of the people. From Thrace came a more "down to earth" expression of the same nature myth, though the names are different. Dionysius, or Bacchus as it was translated later for Roman enthusiasts, was the nature god, whose ceremonies followed the seasons of the agricultural year, with special attention to wine and the animal life: the goat, the bull, the snake.¹ The pantomimes were similar to the Eleusinian ones, but portrayed with orgiastic frenzy. Groups of worshipers wound their way at night with torches into wild glens on the mountains, where they drank wine, heard wild strains of music as intoxicating as the wine, entered into whirling dances with bursts of song summoning the god into their midst; they braided serpents into their hair and fondled them in their bosoms; they descended upon the nests of wild animals, took their young, and ate the flesh raw! They dressed in the skins of the animals, and carried wands tipped with pine cones and wound with ivy. When they reached the point of "divine intoxication" so that they were no longer aware of their surroundings, they felt that they were truly "out of this world," that they had entered into the life of the god. They considered the delirium as a spiritual experience, and all who had that privilege were thereafter known by the name of the god: they were Dionysiacs, or Bacchoi.² The high point of the ceremony was the appearance of the god--probably one of the priests in "divine" robes-- and the "marriage" with any female of his choice.³ One thus initiated could never doubt that a future life was awaiting him: a "Dionysiac" was forever safe.⁴ This was emotionalism in the extreme, and strange for the cultured Greeks. It was gradually restrained somewhat, but always retained some of the old, riotous, vulgar atmosphere of its early origin.⁵

1. Horace L. Fries and Herbert W. Schneider, Religion in Various Cultures (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1932), p. 269.

2. Edmund Davison Soper, The Religions of Mankind (New York: The Abingdon Press, 1921), p. 113.

3. Frazer, op. cit., p. 142.

4. Willoughby, Pagan Regeneration, p. 42.

5. Fries and Schneider, ibid., p. 270.

3. Orphism

Orphism stood between the Eleusinian and Dionysian mysteries, much less restrained than the former, and avoiding the wild excesses of the Dionysiacs. It combined the two nature legends with some additions. Dionysius was a son of Persephone, another name for the Kore of the Eleusinian legend. He was killed and eaten by the Titans, but Athena rescued his heart and took it to Zeus, who swallowed it, and Dionysius was reborn as Zagreus.¹ Since the Zagros mountains are on the eastern border of Mesopotamia, there may be a suggestion from the similarity of the name that this story originated in that far land. Zagreus was an ancestor of men and from him they inherited two natures: a divine one from Dionysius-Zagreus through Zeus, and an evil, earthy one from the Titans. The body was then evil, and only through many successive rebirths could it be purified and made fit for life with the gods. But Orpheus went to the under world, and by means of song rescued his wife. So he was able through the initiation ceremony, to free others from the wheel of these many rebirths. The initiate could go "by the highway of Zeus into the tower of Cronos, where ocean breezes blow around the Islands of the Blest." Religious fervor was induced not by wine, but by song, and also by burning perfume which increased the mystical element. The Orphic ceremony included eating raw flesh but this was carefully prepared and solemnly eaten in a sort of holy communion.² The initiate was dedicated to a life of discipline which extended to the next world. Maps of the future world have been found at their graves with rules of conduct for the soul:

Avoid the Lake of Forgetfulness
at the entrance of the Gate of Hades,
and drink at the Fountain of Memory.³

It is not known whether Orpheus was a mythical figure or a religious leader. The initiates had missionary zeal and won many converts.

1. Willoughby, op. cit., p. 42.

2. George A. Barton, The Religions of the World (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1919), p. 251.

3. Willoughby, ibid., p. 109.

4. Osiris-Isis-Serapis

More is known about the cult of Isis than of most mystery religions, for it was used extensively at a time when sculptors gave themselves wholly to depicting the themes of that wide-spread worship, and particularly because of the writings of Apuleius.¹ He wrote a Latin novel whose plot had to do with a young man who is transformed by a sorceress into an ass. The Goddess Isis finally appears to him and frees him, whereupon he becomes an initiate into her cult.² This is fiction, but the initiation may be fact. The worship is based on the old Egyptian myth of Osiris who died, was mourned by his wife, Isis, and with the help of the son Horus was restored to life. Horus lost an eye in the process, which became one of the precious symbols of the cult. In keeping with the spirit of the time, there was a revival in this Egyptian worship. Ptolemy Soter is said to have combined artificially some of the elements from the Greek-Oriental mysteries to give the old cult new life. Osiris largely dropped out of the picture except as the final judge in the after-life, and Serapis came to be the god worshiped. He was a sort of combination of Osiris-Apis with Pluto or Hermes of the Greek pantheon, and it was a clever political move on the part of the Pharaoh. The old Egyptian hymns were translated and new ones written, new temples built, and the pageantry made more impressive.³ Twice a year gorgeous processions and dramatic festivals made spectacles for crowds to attend, while every morning and evening the shrines were opened with ceremony. Flowers, perfumes, torches, music both instrumental and vocal, paintings and statuary made this religion one of both beauty and significance.⁴ Missionary zeal carried the cult to Rome, but after the defeat of Antony and Cleopatra, anything from Egypt became unpopular. Official opposition to the extent of persecution followed, but martyrdom only increased their enthusiasm.⁵

1. Angus, op. cit., p. 123.

2. Lucius Apuleius, "Introduction"—unsigned, Lib. World's Lit., I, 597.

3. Frazer, op. cit., p. 363.

4. Franz Cumont, The Oriental Religions in Roman Paganism (Chicago: Open Court Publishing Company, 1911), pp. 75, 94, 95.

5. Willoughby, op. cit., p. 169.

5. Cybele, or The Great Mother

The rites of the goddess Cybele have yielded vividly to the spade of the archaeologist. The earlier ones were agricultural, having to do with the return of the young lord, Attis, whose death caused winter to descend upon all vegetation, and the frenzied sorrow of Cybele, the mother. The dramatic action had to do largely with the preparation of the ground for the seed, and its planting, together with sacrifices and orgiastic worship, including the shedding of their own blood that the land might be fertilized.¹

Just as the Orpheus story was an addition incorporated into the Dionysian myth, so there was a later story added to that of Cybele, having to do with a priest sent to care for the daughter of the king on her pilgrimage to a shrine of the god, who emasculated himself that he might be a safe protector for her. This became the foundation of the eunuch-priests who were an integral part of the worship in later years. Perhaps this gave rise to the rendering of the myth in which Attis emasculates himself and bleeds to death under a pine-tree instead of being gored to death by a wild animal as in the earlier legend. This added a repulsive act to the orgiastic ceremony, already sufficiently frenzied.²

Conspicuous in all the cults there was the realization that the gods suffer when their vegetation dies, or when men suffer. The followers of the god share in his suffering. Demeter, Cybele, Isis, by whatever name she is called, the Mother-Goddess is the Mother of Sorrows, and her devotees enter into that suffering with her. Sharing in her sorrow, they also share her joy, and the rebirth of the god becomes their own rebirth. In the Cybele-Attis ritual are these words:

Be of good cheer;
The god has been saved;
Thus for you also there shall be
salvation from your trouble.³

1. Leslie, Old Testament Religion, pp. 17, 40.

2. Lucian, De Dea Syria, trans. Herbert A. Strong, notes, John Garstang, (London: Constantine and Company, 1913) No special page.

3. René Dussaud, "Revue d'Art Oriental et d'Archaeologie," Syria, XII(1931) p. 197.

From Ras Shamra, one of the centers of the Great Mother cult under the name of Anath, with the young lord Baal Zebul, there is this song of rejoicing:

Now the evil Mot is perished,
And Baal-Zebul may live.
Good news, my son, good news!
The heavens begin to rain on the grasses,
The valley becomes green.¹

The Great Mother cult became very popular in Rome, for a time the most popular religion there. It was taken to Rome under dramatic circumstances, when Hannibal was terrorizing Italy in 204 B.C. The Sybilline Books were consulted, and it was learned from them that the enemy could be conquered only if the Idaean Mother were brought to Rome. A delegation went to King Attalus of Pergamum and brought back a dark stone which, uncut but highly polished, was placed as the face of the statue erected in her honor. The rites consisted of a period of mourning with fasting and weird chants, then bringing a pine tree into the temple, decorating it with violets, sacred to the young god and said to have sprung from his blood, and hanging his effigy against the trunk. The fasting was what Jerome called a "gluttonous" one, for it was only meat that was eaten, as cereals and fruits were part of the body of the god and could not be touched. Then came a "day of blood" with frenzy surpassing the orgies of the Dionysiacs, induced by music that has been called "the Anatolian type of jazz." For the initiates there was also a baptism known as the "tauroboleum." They stood in a pit over which a bull was slain, the blood pouring through holes in the platform and bathing them with "life-giving fluid." The next day was the "resurrection" of the god, a delirium of joy known as the "hilaria" with banquets and savage music. A day of rest came after this, no doubt needed, and the final day was one of "purification" when the statue of the goddess was taken in a colorful procession to the river and publicly bathed. The one secret rite was a communion meal, of which little is known except their words that they "ate from the drum and drank from the cymbal."²

1. Dussaud, *op. cit.*, p. 197.

2. Arthur Weigall, *The Paganism in our Christianity* (London: Hutchison & Co., Ltd., 1928), p. 135 ff.

6. Mithraism

Another cult from the East was that of Mithra. Its early origin was perhaps from India, where the one great god was known as Varuna. In Persia he was Ahura Mazda, the god worshiped by Cyrus, in the later days of the Babylonian captivity. But the religion had greatly deteriorated, and the evil god Ahreman was elevated into practical equality with Ahura Mazda, making it a spiritual dualism. There were many demons and angels, and the Magi had come back into power, with many forms of astrology and magic. A reformation brought Mithra, the archangel of Light, into preeminence. According to the myth, he fought with a great bull and won freedom, and so became a mediator between god and man, able to help man overcome the evil that was dragging him down, and to ward off all evil spirits.¹

The initiation services were long and involved, with anywhere from seven to twelve "degrees" and ablutions of several forms, a simulated death and a resurrection. The tauroboleum was the most significant of the rites. Just when it became a part of their worship is unknown. It was very similar to that of the Cybele cult, though observed with greater dignity. The bull was gorgeously appareled to be led onto a grating and killed. In the trench below were the initiates, who were bathed in the fresh blood and thus "regenerated." Perpetual fires burned on their altars, and there was a daily rite celebrated with flute music and silent contemplation of carved or painted altar pieces depicting scenes of the famous bull-fight.²

7. Hermes Trismegistus

A syncretism between Greek and Egyptian religions was that of Hermes Trismegistus. Originally Hermes was simply an upright stone that was set up over a grave, with the symbol of life carved upon it. As such, it may have originated far back in prehistoric times. Personified, Hermes came to be the Guide for the dead, who conducted souls for their rebirth; then the divine herald between the worlds. Any message for the dead could be spoken to the

1. Soper, op. cit., p. 140.

2. Angus, op. cit., p. 121.

"Herm" at the grave.¹ Hermes was the keynote of a philosophic-religious reform in Egypt. Hermes Trismegistus, the "thrice-very-great-Hermes" is the Egyptian god Thoth by his Greek name. As early as the third century B.C., Thoth was known as "thrice-very-great" and the scribe of the gods, author of all the sacred books. So the name of Hermes came to be placed at the head of an extensive cycle of mystic literature, most of which has perished:

Such was the all-knowing Hermes, who saw all things, and seeing understood, and understanding had the power to disclose and to give explanation. For what he knew he graved on stone; yet . . . he hid them mostly . . . that every younger age of cosmic time might seek for them. And thus, with charge unto his kinsmen of the gods to keep sure watch, he mounted to the stars.

To him succeeded Tat, who was at once his son and heir unto these knowledges; and not long afterwards Asclepius-² Imuth, according to the will of Ptah, who is Haephaestus.

This is a syncretism of various mystery religions; the picture of Isis with the baby Horus in her arms was used extensively. Public preaching was an important part of their worship, as "opening of the mysteries" which was most attractive to people who had long wondered what it was all about. But the discussions of syzygies, lists of opposites, with calls to "enter into the god for immortality" must have sounded as mysterious as the secret rites.³ This was the "Quaker religion" among the mysteries: "Spiritual wisdom is found in silence." But there were prayers and hymns of a quiet type:

Thou pleroma in us, O Life, save us;
O Light, enlighten us;
O God, make us spiritual;
Thou Spirit, guard thy Word.
Thou art God, and thy Man cries to thee. . . .
From the Eternal I received blessing, and what I seek.
By thy will I have found rest.⁵

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1. Murray, Five Stages of Greek Religion, p. 82.
 2. Brown, The Wisdom of the Egyptians, pp. 178, 192.
 3. Sir Matthew William Flinders Petrie, Personal Religion in Egypt Before Christianity (London: Macmillan and Company, Ltd., 1909, pp. 39,40.
 4. Angus, op. cit., p. 98.
 5. Kennedy, op. cit., p. 108.

E. Syncretistic Philosophies

Various astrological sects attracted quite a following, and strangely enough, have survived to this day, though they seem to be quite as abstract and mysterious as the most abstruse philosophy. Claiming to date back to the "true Magi," they insisted that all of life was regulated by the stars. They mapped the heavens, picturing the constellations as heroes long known, drew up the signs of the zodiac from the ancient Babylonian and Egyptian records, and claimed astral predictions for all of life.¹ Man could find an assurance for everything both here and hereafter if he would just consult the stars and do things at the auspicious hour. The beauty of the starry heavens appealed to a great many people, for "if the music of the earth could so intoxicate the soul, how ravishing must be the splendid harmony produced by the rhythmic rotation of the spheres!"² This sounds like it came directly from the early "complete and perfect system of the music of the spheres" demonstrated by Pythagoras in the Sixth Century B.C. and well it may be, for out of this same Graeco-Alexandrian center about this time a school of philosophy developed known as the Neo-Pythagoreans, which specialized in reviving his theories of numbers, of which his "harmony of the spheres" was a part, and combining this with much of oriental mysticism and Greek Gnosticism. God was the principle of Good, and Matter the groundwork of Evil, yet the material universe was not wholly evil, for it was the sphere in which the Mind or Soul could work.³ "The Contriver of the Skies placed the stars in order," and through them could rule all mankind.⁴

Another syncretistic philosophy known as Neo-Platonism also developed in Alexandria, beginning about the opening of the Christian era, and lasting for four or five centuries. It was an amalgamation such as was natural in Alexandria, which was a focus of religions from Asia, Africa, and Europe.⁵

1. Kennedy, op. cit., p. 11.

2. Angus, op. cit., p. 280.

3. Unsigned Article, "Neo-Pythagoreanism," Ency. Brit. (1946), XVI, 220.

4. Thomas Creech, trans., Five Books of Manlius, a System of Ancient Astrology (London, 1700); That expression is used many times in the old poem.

5. "Neo-Platonism," Funk & Wagnalls Standard Ency., XVIII, 164.

Even after death the disembodied ghost would be hemmed in by demons of the air; the unknown spaces above, the unknown on the other side of death, were full of terrors. Gnostic theology could point a path of deliverance. Sphere rose above sphere, but beyond all, far, far away, the Great Father abode in a realm of bliss above fate and death and the evil gods. . . . In men creeping on the low earth in bondage under the Element, there was something, a spark, a seed, a breath, which belonged in origin to that far-off divine world. For Neo-Platonism the evil of earth was material substance; the divine element in man was his mind. Man must master the celestial topography, know the order of gates he would have to pass, know what god or demon would confront him at each gate, and the proper password. (To name a demon was to deprive him of his power!) All¹ this knowledge was a Gnosis, and it was all practical!

One of the most remarkable figures in this line was Poseidonius, a Greek teacher at Rhodes. He must have come in contact with some of the Jewish writings, for he combined as rapt and reverent contemplation of the heavens as the purest astral worshiper with an adoration of God in words from the Old Testament. He taught that the soul was a fragment from cosmic fires:

His was a vast system whose summit was the adoration of God who manifests Himself with clearest purity and radiance in the brightness of the stars. He liberated abstruse and formal astral worship from the domain of the purely intellectual and wedded it to the highest emotions. For him, reverent contemplation of the heavens culminated in mystic ecstasy.²

F. Roman Religions

1. Lares and Penates

The early religion of Rome had been an agricultural one, and parts of that lingered when as a whole they had given way to the Greek gods. These were such as were to be found everywhere, quiet home religions. From the earliest days men had had their own special talismans. In the days of the patriarchs, it is recorded in the Old Testament that Rachel stole the

1. Edwyn Robert Bevan, Hellenism and Christianity (London: G. Allen and Unwin, Ltd., 1921), p. 78.

2. Kennedy, op. cit., p. 12

household gods of her father. Nothing would have been known about those gods if Rachel had not stolen them (Gen.31:20-25). The many little figurines that archaeologists pick up in all countries where they are working show that there were many little "household gods" in all religions. And all the ancient world teemed with spirits hard to name, "not pleasant enough to be fairies, neither gods nor demons." Every Roman home had its Lares in a little shrine on the hearth, little twin guardians with a dog at their feet. Something was given them to eat at every meal. They may have once been spirits of ancestors, but their origin is unknown. They were a very close part of the family life. Then there were the Penates, the guardians of the thresholds; and those, too, go back into the shadowy backgrounds of prehistoric life. Each person also had his own particular genius, a sort of guardian angel. There were, too, the Manes, the "kindly ones"—spirits of the revered dead; and there were ghosts of others who had died, who were not kindly, but evil spirits to be feared, avoided, and guarded against with mystic signs. No matter what other religions were adopted, these little household and family gods had power.¹

2. Roman Adaptation of Greek Gods

The national religion of Rome was similar to that of the Homeric Greeks. After their contact with Greece, they adopted the Greek gods, but gave them Latin names. Their mythological backgrounds were similar, and it was a simple matter for them to make the change. However, their story of Troy is told from the Trojan side, for it was the Trojans, fleeing from the wrecked and captured city, who founded their culture.²

Aeneas, the hero of Virgil's Aeneid, having fled from Troy, and having had many vicissitudes on the journey, landed at Sicily, where his father had been buried just a year before, and held a festival in honor of the anniversary, promising to do the same every year. At the funeral mound, Aeneas performed fitting rites:

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1. T. R. Glover, The Conflict of Religions in the Early Roman Empire (London: Methuen and Company, Ltd., 1909), p. 14.
 2. Publius Virgilius Maro (Virgil), The Aeneid, trans. E. Fairfax Taylor, Everyman's Library, 1910.

So from the council to the funeral mound
 He moves, - the centre of a circling crowd.
 Two bowls of wine he pours upon the ground,
 Two of warm milk, and two of victim's blood,
 And scattering purple flowers invokes the shade aloud.
 (V,xi,p.115)

A huge snake with blue and gold scales came from the stones of the mound and ate the things spread out for the dead, but did no harm to any of them. They considered this a good omen (V,xii,xiii,pp.115,116). The festival lasted nine days with games of skill played before the tomb: a boat race, foot race, prize fight, and archery contest (V,xvi-lxxxiv,pp.116-131).

The phantom of Anchises, the father of Aeneas came to him at midnight telling him that he is dwelling in the blest Elysian plain, and urging him to come down to Avernus to meet him: if he makes due sacrifices to the Sybil, she will assist him (V,xcviii-c,p.137). Aeneas therefore visited the Sybil's shrine, asking her to "ope the gates of Hell" in order that he may see his father (VI,ii,xvi,pp.145,148). After several feats and sacrifices, the Sybil conducted him to the under world. Before the gates he saw Grief and Care, Old Age and Diseases, Famine, Want, and Fear, and other dread shapes, which were only shades, so his sword was useless. In gloom they went through Tartarus to the Acheron Lake, thick with whirlpools, and entered the shallop of Charon to cross the River Styx, along with pale corpses. Others were left stranded on the shore because they lay unburied so could not be taken over, but must wait or wander (VI,xxxvi-xlv,pp.153-156). They saw familiar shapes, but hurried on past the gates of Tartarus, "in whose drear abyss poor sinners purge with pains the lives they lived amiss" (VI,lxxi,p.162).

From within
 Loud groans are heard, and wailings of dismay,
 The whistling scourge, the fetter's clink and din,
 Shrieks as of tortured fiends, and all the sounds of sin.
 (VI,lxxiii,p.163)

The joy of meeting his father was clouded by finding him a mere "shade":

Thrice he essayed the phantom to embrace;
 Thrice, vainly clasped, it melted from his sight,
 Swift as the winged wind, or vision of the night. (VI,xcii,p.167)

Even in the Elysian Fields the shades long for life on earth, and after a thousand years of penance, they are able to take mortal bodies again. But "each pays for ancient sin with punishment below" (VI,xcii,p.169).

Virgil was born in 70 B.C. While his epic records the life and times of a far earlier day, the religion there presented was still followed by many of the people. The gods of Mount Olympus were worshiped under Roman names.

3. Emperor Worship

The religion to which the Romans demanded adherence throughout their whole Empire was Emperor Worship—perhaps, like the Shintoism of Japan, they considered this more a patriotism than a religion. Statues of the Emperor were placed in all the main centers, before which all must burn incense and bow, and in every way show respect and reverence. Those who refused were counted traitors and "atheists"—not believing in the gods, if they did not believe in the emperor as god!¹

The proclamation of some of the Roman emperors as gods is certainly a most fantastic idea! There was nothing very godlike about any of them except their power over the lives of men. But to explain the hero, or the man in any exalted position, by giving him a soul superior to that of the average man was a teaching of Plato, from whom it passed to the Romans.² An Ephesian inscription on a statue of Julius Caesar reads:

Julius Caesar, Saviour, Benefactor,
God Manifest,
Universal Saviour of Human Life.

Virgil spoke of Augustus Caesar as "Tutelary God and Saviour of the whole human race." An altar dedicated to Nero gave him the title of "God and Deliverer for Ever."³ This seems impossible, but Plutarch reports that during his lifetime Nero's enormities had led the Roman people to feel that he was "no human creature, but some vindictive supernal power that had seized the

1. Willoughby, op. cit., p. 30.

2. Case, The Origin of Christian Supernaturalism, p. 80.

3. Angus, op. cit., p. 25.

empire." And after his death there quickly arose the belief that he would return to take vengeance on his enemies. "Nero redivivus" was the Latin expression for it. When Suetonius was a young man an impostor who claimed to be Nero appeared among the Parthians and won a following.¹

The Jews were privileged to follow their own laws and did not need to worship the Emperor, by special decree of Claudius Caesar because of his friendship with Herod Agrippa. The people of other religions had no scruples against doing obeisance to the Emperor's statue, and were free to have their rites and to build their own chapels, even in the city of Rome.²

G. Roman Attitude Toward Other Religions

The Romans were thoroughly syncretistic. Having conquered "the world" and desiring to have peace, they fostered the worship of all the gods of their people, and Rome was filled with the chapels of all religions. The correspondence of Pliny the Younger with the Emperor Trajan throws light on this attitude: tolerance, but no actual respect for beliefs of others. Pliny was having erected a Roman forum and found on the grounds an old temple to the "Mother of the Gods" and wanted to know what to do about it:

Upon inquiry whether this temple had been consecrated, I was informed that their ceremonies of dedication differ from ours. You will be pleased, therefore, to consider whether a temple which has not been dedicated according to our rites may be removed consistently with the reverence due to religion.

And Trajan's reply:

You may without scruple . . . remove the Temple of the Mother of the Gods from the place where it now stands to any other spot more convenient. You need be under no difficulty with respect to the act of dedication; for the ground of a foreign city is not capable of receiving the kind of consecration which is sanctified by our laws.³

1. Case, op. cit., quoting Plutarch, "Otho, II" and Suetonius, "Nero" LVII.

2. Josephus, Antiquities, XIX, v, 3—III, 365.

3. Gaius Plinius Caecilius Secundus (Pliny the Younger), Letters, trans. William Melmouth, revised, F. C. T. Bosanquet, Harvard Classics, IX, 405.

H. Roman Philosophers

Many of the Romans were interested in the Greek philosophies, and there were wise men among them who studied the great and universal questions of life and death. Cicero was one of this number:

After death, indeed, sensation is either what one would desire, or it disappears altogether. But to disregard death is a lesson which must be studied from our youth up, for unless that is learnt, no one can have a quiet mind. For die we certainly must, and that, too, without being certain whether it may not be this day. As death therefore is hanging over our heads every hour, how can a man ever be unshaken in soul if he fears it?¹

Cicero also quotes Xenophon, the Greek historian, telling of the last words of the Persian King Cyrus, on his deathbed:

Do not suppose, my dearest son, that when I have left you I shall be nowhere and no one. Even when I was with you, you did not see my soul, but knew that it was in this body of mine from what I did. Believe then that it is still the same, even though you see it not. . . . When man's natural frame is resolved into its elements in death, it is clearly seen whither each of the other elements departs; for they all go to the place from which they came; but the soul alone is invisible alike when present and when departing.²

And Cicero continues:

Don't you think that the soul which has the clearer and longer sight sees that it is starting for better things? . . . I am transported with the desire to see your fathers who were the objects of my reverence and affections. Nor is it only those whom I knew that I long to see; it is those also of whom I have been told and have read, whom I have myself recorded in my history. . . .

O glorious day when I shall set out to join that heavenly conclave and company of souls and depart from the turmoil and impurities of this world!³

1. Marcus Tullius Cicero, On Old Age, Trans., E. S. Shuckburgh. Harvard Classics, IX, 73.

2. Ibid., IX, 75.

3. Ibid., IX, 76, 77.

J. Alexandrian Judaism

There was a large Jewish settlement at Alexandria in Egypt, the influence of which was felt not only in Judaism, but all over the world. "Among these exiles, the Hellenizing tendencies, which, in opposition to orthodox Judaism, had very nearly won the day even in Palestine itself, had an opportunity to work out freely."¹ Philo Judaeus was an outstanding leader of this group.

(Philo Judaeus) was the greatest of all the Jewish philosophers of the Alexandrian school. On one side he is quite a Greek, on the other quite a Jew. . . . He knows and often cites the great Greek poets, but his chief studies had been in Greek philosophy. His system was eclectic, but the borrowed elements are combined into a new unity with so much originality that he may fairly be regarded as representing a philosophy of his own.²

Philo tried to show the inner harmony between Moses and Plato:

For Philo, God was absolute perfection. This absolute perfection, purity, and loftiness of God would be violated by direct contact with imperfect, impure and finite things. But though God himself is so far removed from the finite world, He disposes of an infinite variety of finite forces, through whose mediation an active relation of God to the world is brought about.²

It was through the LOGOS, an old Greek conception given new emphasis, that this contact was made. This was the highest mediator between God and man, the "first-born son of God, the archangel who is the vehicle of all revelation, and the high priest who stands before God on behalf of the world."³ This was the "sacred name of all of God that can be revealed and made manifest."⁴ While Philo denounced the mystery cults, he offered a "divine ecstasy" that sounds fully as mysterious: "To all suppliants I have made known the way that leads to heaven, preparing a thoroughfare that they might not grow weary of the journey!"

1. Rogers, History of Philosophy, p. 168.

2. Emil Schurer and Charles Bigg, "Philo," Ency. Brit. (1946), XVII, 737, 738.

3. Ibid.

4. Rufus M. Jones, The Church's Debt to Heretics (London: J. Clark and Company, 1925), p. 64.

5. Kennedy, op. cit., p. 12.

Thus there was a general amalgamation of many and various elements in the world of the Roman Empire. Mystery cults of the grossest kind had chapels beside schools of philosophy in the capital city of Rome. There was a religion to suit every type and temperament, and an intermingling of ideas to confuse many earnest seekers after eternal truth.

Because of inner turmoil and outer persecution, many Jews had left their homeland and settled in various parts of the Empire, where they came into contact with these varying beliefs, and even those most devoted to their laws and customs could not but be somewhat influenced by the new ways and new ideas. Some recognition of this has been seen in the Apocryphal literature, some of which came out of Palestine, and some out of Egypt or other countries where there was Hellenistic influence. More of it will be seen in the pseudepigraphical writings.

CHAPTER XIII

THE PSEUDEPIGRAPHICAL WRITINGS

A. General Characteristics of the Writings

1. Pseudonymous Authorship

The works here discussed are those written by Jews either in Palestine or Egypt which show strong Hellenistic traits, and were not accepted by the Jewish leaders as Scripture, yet made a deep impression on their thought. They have not been accepted by the Christian church either, yet here also they have had influence. In recent years they have "come into their own" due to their value as "historical memorials" of their time:

'It was simply owing to the evil character of the period in which their lot was cast that these enthusiasts and mystics, exhibiting on occasion the inspiration of Old Testament prophets, were obliged to issue their works under the aegis of some ancient name. The Law, which claimed to be the highest and final word of God could tolerate no fresh message from God, and so when men were moved by the Spirit of God to make known their visions relating to the past, the present, and the future, and to proclaim the higher ethical truths they had won, they could not do so openly, and so were forced to resort to pseudonymous publication.¹

These writings, therefore, have been given to the world under names of such ancients as Adam and Eve, Enoch, Noah, the Twelve Patriarchs, Moses, and others, obviously false. With modern copyright ideas, these are counted plagiarisms. Present-day thoughts differ from ancient ones along that line, and in their day no such stigma would be attached. Another reason sometimes conjectured for the pseudonymous authorship is that much of the writing was a political propaganda, so that for safety their names had to be concealed.

1. R. H. Charles, Pseudepigrapha, Volume II of The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament, op. cit., p. 163.

A third reason for pseudonymous authorship has been suggested: many of the messages came from visions, and the books were named for the visions:

We should have an explanation of the pseudonymous form of apocalypses, which would be also in-part an apology for it, if we supposed that apocalyptic traditions running actually far back, tended to connect themselves, in the course of their transmission, with the names of certain ancient seers—Enoch, who walked with the Elohim; Noah, who was rescued from the first world judgment; Abraham, the friend of God; Moses, who saw God face to face. Then the final writer, fully aware that he is not the original author of his material, but only its scribe and interpreter, might believe that the real author was in a true sense the one in whose name the traditions passed current. It would be easier to conceive of such a state of mind if we supposed the writing to be done in a condition of mental excitement or exaltation, when one might regard his own free imagination as in a spiritual sense true to the mind of the ancient seer and intended by him.¹

2. Oriental and Hellenistic Influence.

Henri Burr calls attention to the great stream of religious thought flowing through the world and surrounding the nation of Judah. He mentions Babylonians, Hittites, Canaanites, Egyptians, Chaldeans, Persians, Aegeans, Greeks and Romans. From all these some influence was received, but the Jews never accepted anything that was not in line with the great character of God.² From Babylonia, Iran, and Egypt they drew their cosmology, angelology and demonology, mythology, and eschatology, but rejected everything unfitting. Their conviction of just one God for the nation, enlarged during the exile to the one and only God of all the earth, made them ready to accept the Greek ideal of the glorious transcendence of God, but they never considered God as abstract. God remained personal, revered in Shekinah Glory, but known and loved as their "Guide for ever and ever."³

1. Frank Chamberlain Porter, The Messages of the Apocalyptic Writers (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1918), pp. 30, 31.

2. Charles Guignebert, The Jewish World in the Time of Jesus (London: Trench, Trubner, and Co., Ltd., 1951), "Introduction" by Henri Burr, pp. vii, xl.

3. Ibid., pp. 86, 96.

B. The Writings

There are seventeen books comprising the Pseudepigrapha according to R. H. Charles. One of these, II Esdras, is included in the Authorized Version of the Apocrypha, but not in later versions; and one, called "Fragments of a Zadokite Work," has already been discussed in connection with the Dead Sea Scrolls, under the name of the "Damascus Document." These range in date from a probable Fifth Century B.C. to a possible Fifth Century A.D., though if any were written so late in final form, they were based on earlier documents or traditions. Some come from Palestine and were first written in either Hebrew or Aramaic; others come from Egypt, written in Greek. In most cases the original texts are missing, but the work has been preserved in Greek, Syriac, Arminian, Latin, or some other tongue. Many were lost for years and known only by references to them in later writings. Some have been found among the fragments of the Dead Sea Scrolls, and it is hoped that some Hebrew originals may be reclaimed there.¹ These books will be examined to find what they have to say about the subject of this study: their communion with God, their attitude toward death, their expectation of a Messiah or a messianic kingdom on earth, their ideas of the life after death, both for individual life and for a supernatural kingdom for the nation.

1. Palestinian Writings

a. The Story of Ahikar, circa 450 B.C. This earliest writing, which may date to the Fifth Century B.C., is anonymous rather than pseudepigraphical. It recounts a folktale of an earlier time, during the reign of Sennacherib, and is known as the "Tale of a Grateful Ghost."² Briefly, the story is that Ahikar, Keeper of the Great Seal of Sennacherib, having no son, brought up his nephew in that place, and in time turned over his office to his nephew. He proved to be a thorough rascal, and managed to have his uncle discredited and ordered executed. A friend concealed him, and when the nephew was proved to be worthless, the "dead" came to life again. Ahikar was restored to office,

1. Patrick W. Skehan, Archaeological Newsletter of A.S.O.R., 1955 #4.

2. Charles, op. cit., p. 715.

and served his king successfully in Egypt. Much of the book is filled with the teachings of Ahikar as he instructed his nephew. The only part with which this study is concerned is the funeral feast:

Let them put on raiment of mourning, and let them
wail and weep and lament over me . . . and let them
make a funeral feast over me.

Sennacherib also ordered the nephew to make a funeral feast, but he "gathered vain and lewd folk and set them down at the table with singing and great joy," which shows that though a "feast" was held in connection with a funeral, it was a solemn occasion.¹

2. The Book of Enoch, 200-110 B.C. This is not a single work. There were many authors, and the compilation was continued through many years. "Some of the authors belonged to the true succession of prophets." It touches upon every subject that could have arisen in the ancient schools of the prophets, and is for the history of theological development "the most important pseudepigraph of the first two centuries B.C."² Most of the book is written in poetry. Some of the component parts can be recognized and dated:

Book of Noah, vi-xxxvi; lxxxiii-xc; before 170 B.C.
Apocalypse of Weeks, xciii:1-10; xci:12-17; before 140 B.C.
Unnamed: xci-civ: 109-95 B.C.
Unnamed: xxxvii-lxxi: 94-64 B.C. ³

The opening vision shows the future lot of the wicked and the righteous:

And behold! He cometh with ten thousands of His holy ones
To execute judgment upon all,
And to destroy the ungodly:
And to convict all flesh
Of all the works of their ungodliness which they have
ungodly committed. (En.1:9,p.189)

And then shall be bestowed upon the elect wisdom,
And they shall all live and never again sin.
(En.5:8.p.190)

1. Charles, op. cit., pp. 747,749.

2. Ibid., p. 163.

3. Ibid., p. 170.

The next section tells of the fall of the angels, giving the names of their leaders, and the subsequent demoralization of mankind. But Michael and the holy angels interceded for men, and the angels were punished:

And the Lord said to Raphael: Bind Azazel hand and foot and cast him into the darkness; and make an opening in the desert . . . and cast him therein. And place upon him rough and jagged rocks, and cover him with darkness, and let him abide there forever. . . . And on the day of the great judgment he shall be cast into the fire. (En.10:4-6;pp.193,194)

Enoch's first vision of heaven was glorious:

From underneath the throne came streams of flaming fire so that I could not look thereon. And the Great Glory sat thereon, and His raiment shone more brightly than the sun and was whiter than any snow. None of the angels could enter and behold His face by reason of the magnificence and glory, and no flesh could behold Him. (En.14:18-21,p.197)

Enoch prayed for the fallen angels, but was told that the angels were the ones who should have interceded for men instead, and that their lot was hopeless.

Enoch then began a journey through Sheol. He saw three "hollow places" there, and was told that they were made so that the spirits of the dead could be separated: one for the righteous where there are springs of water; one for sinners who are undergoing punishment with the possibility of a new sentence on the day of judgment; and the third for those who are already judged and will not be raised on the last day. This is the first suggestion of any "second chance" on the judgment day. (En.22:10-13,pp.202,203).

Enoch has a vision of the righteous on that judgment day:

On that day Mine Elect One shall sit on the throne of glory
And shall try their works,
And their places of rest shall be innumerable.

And their souls shall grow strong within them when they
see Mine elect ones,

And those who have called upon My glorious name:
Then will I cause Mine Elect One to dwell among them.

And I will transform the heaven and make it an eternal
blessing and light:

And I will transform the earth and make it a blessing.
(En.45:3-5,p.214)

When Enoch asked about this Elect One, he was told:

This is the Son of Man who hath righteousness,
With whom dwelleth righteousness. . . .
Because the Lord hath chosen him.

And at that hour that the Son of Man was named
In the presence of the Lord of Spirits . . .
Yea, before the sun and the signs were created,
Before the stars of the heaven were made,
His name was named before the Lord of Spirits.

The Elect One standeth before the Lord of Spirits,
And his glory is for ever and ever,
And his might unto all generations.
And in him dwells the spirit of wisdom,
And the spirit which gives insight,
And the spirit of understanding and of might,
And the spirit of those who have fallen asleep in
righteousness.

And he shall judge the secret things,
And none shall be able to utter a lying word before him;
For He is the Elect One before the Lord of Spirits,
according to His good pleasure.

(En.46-48, pp. 214-217.)

The resurrection of the dead is very vividly told:

And in those days shall the earth also give back that which
has been entrusted to it,
And Sheol also shall give back that which it has received,
And hell shall give back that which it owes.

For in those days the Elect One shall arise,
And He shall choose the righteous and the holy from among them:
For the day has drawn nigh that they should be saved.

And the Elect One shall sit on My throne.

(En.51:1-3, p.218)

After this, Enoch was taken up to heaven, where he saw the "secrets of the
ends of the heaven:"

And round about were Seraphim, Cherubim, and Ophannin:
And these are they who sleep not
And guard the throne of His glory.

And I saw angels who could not be counted,
A thousand thousands, and ten thousand times ten thousand,
Encircling that house.

(En.71:7,8;p.236)

Enoch had dream-visions of all the history of Israel, which he told to his son Methuseleh. Then he wrote out a book of admonition for his children. Because Enoch had been in the very presence of the Lord, he knew surely the things of which he was speaking:

Now therefore, I swear to you, the righteous, by the glory of the Great and Honored and Mighty One in dominion, and by His greatness I swear to you:

I know a mystery
And have read the heavenly tablets,
And have seen the holy books,
And have found written therein and inscribed regarding them:

That all goodness and joy and glory are prepared for them,
And written down for the spirits of those who have died in
righteousness,
And that manifold good shall be given to you in recompense
for your labors,
And that your lot is abundantly beyond the lot of the living,
And the spirits of you who have died in righteousness shall
live and rejoice.

Woe to you, ye sinners, when ye have died,
If ye die in the wealth of your sins.

Know ye that their souls will be made to descend into Sheol,
And that they will be wretched in their great tribulation.

(En.103:1-7, pp.274,275)

Enoch felt sure that it would be valuable for his words to be written down in a book. Though some would alter and pervert them, there would be others to speak them truthfully, and the righteous would learn from them. Of this, Dr. Charles says:

It is seldom that authors attain to the immortality which they hope for, and it is still more seldom that anonymous authors achieve this distinction. And yet it is just such a distinction that the authors of the Book of Enoch have achieved. . . . He looked forward to a time when his writings would be translated into various languages and become to the righteous a "cause of joy and uprightness and much wisdom." This hope was to a large degree realized in the centuries immediately preceding and following the Christian era, when the currency of these apocalyptic writings was very widespread.¹

1. op. cit., p. 163.

Enoch's last message was a beautiful one:

The Lord bade to summon and testify to the children of earth . . . I and My Son will be united with them forever in the paths of uprightness in their lives; and ye shall have peace; rejoice, ye children of uprightness. AMEN.

(En.105:1,2; p.277)

c. The Book of Jubilees, 135-105 B.C. Dr. Charles counts this in some ways the most important of all the speudepigraphical writings for the student of religion, for it stresses the supremacy of the Law, yet "this most triumphant manifesto of legalism contained within its pages the element that was destined to dispute its supremacy . . . apocalyptic, which was the source of the higher theology in Judaism."¹ It was written in Hebrew by a Pharisee, between the time when John Hyrcanus became High-Priest and before his break with the Pharisees. It is the history of events from Creation to Sinai, from a Pharisaic standpoint, with added folklore: "an enlarged Targum on Genesis and Exodus," intended to counteract Hellenistic tendencies.² In the story of the flood, there is this judgment of the wicked reported:

There is nothing in heaven or on earth, or in light or in darkness, or in Sheol or in the depth, or in the place of darkness which is not judged; and all their judgments are ordained and written and engraved. In regard to all he will judge, the great according to his greatness, and the small according to his smallness, and each according to his way. And He is not one who will regard the person of any, nor is He one who will receive gifts . . . for He is a righteous judge.

(Jub.5:13-17; p.20)

Abraham gives a warning to Jacob:

As for the worshipers of idols and the profane,
There shall be no hope for them in the land of the living;
And there shall be no remembrance of them on the earth;
For they shall descend into Sheol,
And into the place of condemnation shall they go.

May the Most High God preserve thee from destruction.

(Jub.22:22,23; pp.46,47)

1. Charles, op. cit., p. 5.

2. Ibid.

When the people begin to study the law and to observe it, there will come a time of everlasting joy. Moses was told to write it all down:

And the days shall begin to grow many and increase amongst the
children of men

And their days drew near to a thousand years,

And to a greater number of years than before was the number
of days.

And there shall be no old man

Nor one who is not satisfied with his days,

For all shall be as children and youths.

And all their days they shall complete and live in peace and joy,

And there shall be no Satan nor any evil destroyer;

For all their days shall be days of blessing and healing.

And their bones shall rest in the earth,

And their spirits shall have much joy,

And they shall know that it is the Lord who executes judgment,

And shows mercy to hundreds and thousands and to all that

love Him. (Jub.23:27-31; p.49)

d. The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs, 109-106 B.C. These were written by one author, a Pharisee living in Judea in the days of John Hyrcanus, and can be dated fairly accurately because it was after the final victory over the Syrian power, and before the breach with the Pharisees. "The author combined loyalty to the best traditions of his party with unbounded admiration for John Hyrcanus." At this time the Maccabaeon power was at its height, and its leader combined the offices of prophet, priest and king. The history of the nation is recounted, as each Patriarch tells the story of his life, and Levi is pointed out as the chosen tribe from whom the Messiah is to come, instead of Judah—no doubt because John Hyrcanus was a Levite.¹

Reuben, 1st Patriarch:

Draw ye near to Levi in humbleness of heart, that ye may receive a blessing from his mouth. For he shall bless Israel and Judah, because him hath God chosen to be king over all the nation. And bow down before his seed, for on our behalf it will die in wars visible and invisible, and will be among you an eternal king.

(Test.12: Reub.6:10-12; p.300)

1. Charles, op. cit., p. 282.

Simeon, 2nd Patriarch:

And now, my children, obey Levi and Judah, and be not
 lifted up against these two tribes, for from them shall
 arise unto you the salvation of God. For the Lord shall
 raise up from Levi as it were a High-Priest, and from
 Judah as it were a King. He shall save all the race of
 Israel. (Test.12: Sim:7:1,2; p.303)

Levi, the third Patriarch, was taken up to heaven in a vision, and saw
 its whole panorama: the lowest heaven, gloomy, for the unrighteous; then the
 second, with fire, and snow and ice, for retribution; a third for judgment;
 the rest for the holy angels in ascending scale until the Highest, for the
 Lord of Glory. The angel said to him:

Thou shalt stand before the Lord,
 And shalt be His minister,
 And shalt declare His mysteries to men. . . .
 Then shall the Lord raise up a new priest,
 And to him all the words of the Lord shall be revealed. . . .
 And his star shall arise in heaven as of a king,
 Lighting up the light of knowledge as the sun the day. . . .
 In his priesthood shall sin come to an end,
 And the lawless shall cease to do evil.
 And he shall open the gates of paradise. . . .
 And Beliar shall be bound by him,
 And He shall give power to His children to tread upon
 the evil spirits.
 And the Lord shall rejoice in His children,
 And be well pleased in His beloved ones for ever.

(Test.12: Levi 2:10;18:2-13; pp.305,314,315)

Judah, 4th Patriarch:

After these things shall a star arise to you from Jacob
 in peace,
 And a man shall arise like the sun of righteousness;
 And no sin shall be found in him.
 And the heavens shall be opened unto him,
 To pour out the spirit, the blessing of the Holy Father;
 And He shall pour out the spirit of blessing upon you.
 And ye shall be unto Him sons in truth. . . .
 Then shall the sceptre of my kingdom shine forth;
 And from your root shall arise a stem;
 And from it shall grow a rod of righteousness to the
 Gentiles,
 To judge and save all that call upon the Lord.

(Test.12: Judah 24:2-6; pp.323,324)

Issachar, 5th Patriarch:

Love the Lord and your neighbor,
Have compassion on the poor and weak. . . .

Levi and Judah were glorified by the Lord even among the sons of Jacob; for the Lord gave them an inheritance, and to Levi He gave the priesthood, and to Judah the kingdom. And do ye therefore obey them. . . .

No deed of wicked men shall rule over you;
And every wild beast shall ye subdue,
Since you have with you the God of heaven and earth,
And walk with men in singleness of heart.

(Test.12: Iss.2:7;7:7; pp.327,328)

Zebulun, 6th Patriarch:

After these things shall there arise unto you the Lord
Himself, the light of righteousness. . . .

And now, my children, grieve not that I am dying . . .
for I shall rise again in the midst of you, as a ruler in the midst of his sons; and I shall rejoice in my tribe, as many as shall keep the law of the Lord and the commandments of Zebulun their father.

(Test.12: Zeb.9:8;10:1,2; pp.331,332)

Dan, 7th Patriarch:

There shall arise to you from the tribe of Levi (Judah in some versions) the salvation of the Lord. . . .

(He shall) execute an everlasting vengeance on our enemies;
And turn disobedient hearts to the Lord,
And give to them that call upon Him eternal peace.
And the saints shall rest in Eden,
And in the New Jerusalem shall the righteous rejoice.

(Test.12: Dan 5:10-12; p.334)

Naphtali, 8th Patriarch:

Charge your children that they be united to Levi and
to Judah;

For through them shall salvation arise unto Israel,
And in them shall Jacob be blessed. . . .
And God shall be glorified among the Gentiles through you,
And the devil shall flee from you,
And the wild beasts shall fear you,
And the Lord shall love you.

(Test.12: Naph.8:1-4; pp.338,339)

Gad, 9th Patriarch:

Tell these things to your children, that they honor Judah and Levi, for from them shall the Lord raise up salvation to Israel.

(Test.12: Gad 8:1, p.342)

Asher, 10th Patriarch:

The Most High shall visit the earth, coming Himself and
breaking the head of the dragon in the water.
He shall save Israel and all the Gentiles.

(Test.12: Asher 7:3; p.345)

Joseph, 11th Patriarch:

Do you therefore, my children, observe the commandments
of the Lord, and honor Levi and Judah; for from them shall
arise unto you one who saveth Israel.

For His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, which shall
not pass away. (Test.12: Jos.19:11,12; p.354)

Benjamin, 12th Patriarch:

Fear ye the Lord, and love your neighbor; and even though
the spirits of Beliar claim you to afflict you with every
evil, they shall not have dominion over you. . . . For he
that feareth God and loveth his neighbor cannot be smitten
by the spirit of Beliar, being shielded by the fear of God.
. . . Keep the commandments of God, until the Lord shall
reveal his salvation to all Gentiles. And then shall ye see
Enoch, Noah, and Shem, and Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob,
rising on the right hand in gladness.

Then shall we also rise, each one over our tribe, worship-
ing the King of heaven. Then also all men shall rise,
some unto glory and some unto shame.

(Test.12: Ben.3:3;10:5-8; pp.357,359)

e. The Psalms of Solomon, circa 50 B.C. This is a collection of eighteen
Psalms written probably in the middle of the first century B.C. They were
probably written originally in Hebrew, though the only versions known are in
Greek and Syriac. They are most likely the work of one or more Pharisees, for
in the text the righteous seem to be Pharisees and the sinners, Sadducees,
with outspoken opposition to a non-Davidic monarchy.¹

They that fear the Lord shall rise to life eternal,
And their life shall be in the light of the Lord, and shall
come to an end no more. (Psa.Sol.3:16; p.635)

O God, when we are in distress, we call upon Thee for help,
And Thou dost not turn back our petition, for Thou art our God.
(Psa.Sol.5:7; p.637)

1. Charles, op. cit., pp. 625, 627.

Happy is the man whose heart is fixed to call upon the name of the Lord;
 When he remembereth the name of the Lord, he will be saved.
 His ways are made even by the Lord,
 And the works of his hand are preserved by the Lord, his God.
 At what he sees in his bad dreams, his soul shall not be troubled;
 When he passeth through rivers and the tossing of the seas, he shall not
 be dismayed. . . .
 And the Lord heareth the prayer of everyone that feareth God,
 And every request of the soul that hopes for Him doth the Lord accomplish.
 (Psa.Sol.6:1-8; p.639)

I thought upon the judgments of God since the creation of heaven and earth;
 I held God righteous in His judgments, which have been from of old.
 God laid bare their sins in the full light of day;
 All the earth came to know the righteous judgments of God.
 (Psa.Sol.8:7,8; p.640)

Stand on the height, O Jerusalem, and behold thy children,
 From the East and the West, gathered together by the Lord;
 From the North they come, in the gladness of their God,
 From the isles afar off God hath gathered them;
 High mountains hath he abased into a plain for them;
 The hills fled at their entrance.
 (Psa.Sol.11:3-5; pp.643,644)

For the Lord spareth his pious ones,
 And blotteth out their errors by His chastening.
 For the life of the righteous shall be forever;
 But sinners shall be taken away into destruction,
 And their memorial shall be found no more.
 (Psa.Sol.13:9,10; p.645)

Faithful is the Lord to them that love Him in truth,
 To them that endure His chastening,
 To them that walk in the righteousness of His commandments,
 In the law which He commanded us that we might live.
 The pious of the Lord shall live by it for ever;
 The Paradise of the Lord, the trees of life, are His
 pious ones,
 Their planting is rooted for ever;
 They shall not be plucked up all the days of heaven.
 (Psa.Sol.14:1-3; p.645)

Sinners shall perish forever in the day of the Lord's judgment,
 When God visiteth the earth with His judgment.
 But they that fear the Lord shall find mercy therein,
 And shall live by the compassion of their God.
 But sinners shall perish forever. (Psa.Sol.15:12,13; p.646)

f. The Assumption of Moses, 7-29 B.C. This book is thought to have been written by a Pharisee Quietist, protesting against the secularization of the Pharisees. It was written in Hebrew, from that translated into Greek, and from the Greek into the Latin of the present text. From the words about the house of Herod, the book can be definitely dated. There is no Messiah, but Moses had been prepared from the foundation of the world to be the mediator of the covenant, and also the intercessor in the spiritual world.¹

There shall be a man of the tribe of Levi who shall speak: . . .

(The Lord's) kingdom shall appear throughout all His creation,
And then Satan shall be no more,
And sorrow shall depart with him. . . .
For the Heavenly One shall arise from His royal throne,
And He will go forth from His holy habitation
With indignation and wrath on account of His sons.
And the earth shall tremble; to its confines shall it be
shaken;
And the high mountains shall be made low
And the hills shall be shaken and fall. . . .
For the Most High will arise, the Eternal God alone,
And He will appear to punish the Gentiles,
And He will destroy all their idols.
Then thou, O Israel, shalt be happy.

(Assump. Moses 9:1; 10:1-8; pp. 421, 422)

g. The Martyrdom of Isaiah, circa 50 A.D. This is a fragmentary work, telling the story of the evil deeds of Manasseh, culminating in the murder of the prophet Isaiah. He had taken refuge in a cedar tree, but the king had the tree "sawn in sunder" and Isaiah with it. The author was a Jew. The details of the death are as those given in the Jerusalem Talmud, and also in the Targums of Isaiah.²

The angel of lawlessness, who is the ruler of this world,
is Beliar. . . . And he delighted in Jerusalem because of
Manasseh.

(Mar. Isa. 2:4; p. 160)

When Isaiah was being sawn in sunder, he neither cried
aloud nor wept, but his lips spake with the Holy Spirit until
he was sawn in twain.

(Mar. Isa. 5:14; p. 162)

1. Charles, op. cit., pp. 407, 410, 412.

2. Ibid., pp. 155, 158.

h. IV Ezra, circa 100 A.D. This book must have been considered of great value, for there are many translations, though the Hebrew original is lost. It is found in Latin, Syriac, Ethiopic, Armenian, and two different Arabic versions, and fragments have been found of others, as well as several quotations from a lost Greek translation.¹

The visions are presented as experienced by Ezra in Babylon. His name is also given as Salathiel, which is the Biblical Shealtiel, but he could not be the father of Zerubbabel, since he preceded Ezra by a hundred years.² Ezra's first question concerns the sin and misery in the world, and why Israel has to suffer; the reply is that man cannot know the ways of God:

What belongs to thee--the things that have intermingled
with thy growth--thou art incapable of understanding; how
then should thy vessel be able to comprehend the ways of the
Most High?
(IV Ez.4:11; p.565)

Behold the days come, and it shall be
When I am about to draw nigh to visit the
dwellers upon the earth. . . .

At that time the books shall be opened before the face of
the firmament, and all see together. . . . And whosoever
shall have survived all these things that I have told unto
thee, he shall be saved and shall see my salvation at the
end of the world. And the men who have been taken up, who
have not tasted death from their birth, shall appear.
(IV Ez.6:18,20,25; p.576)

For my Son the Messiah shall be revealed, together with
those who are with him, and shall rejoice the survivors four
hundred years. And it shall be after those years that my Son
the Messiah shall die, and all in whom there is human breath.
Then shall the world be turned into primeval silence seven
days, like as at the beginning; so that no man is left.
And it shall be after seven days . . .

The earth shall restore those that sleep in her,
And the dust those that rest therein,
And the Most High shall be revealed upon the throne
of judgment. . . .

The furnace of Gehenna shall be made manifest,
And over against it the Paradise of delight.
(IV Ez.7:28-36; pp.582,583)

1. Charles, op. cit. pp. 542,543.

2. Ibid., p. 561.

Ezra asks about the condition of the soul between death and the final judgment, and receives the reply:

When the decisive decree has gone forth from the Most High that the men should die,

As the soul from the body departs
that it may return to Him who gave it,
to adore the glory of the Most High first of all:
if it be one of those who have scorned
and have not kept the ways of the Most High . . .
such souls shall not enter into habitations,
but shall wander about henceforth in torture. . . .

Of those who have kept the ways of the Most High, this is the order: . . .

They shall rejoice with boldness,
be confident without confusion,
be glad without fear,
for they are hastening to behold the face of Him
whom in life they served,
and from whom they are destined to receive their
reward in glory. (IV Ez.7:78-98; pp.587-589)

The torments listed are seven:

1. They will recognize themselves as scorners.
2. They cannot repent.
3. They will see the rewards of the righteous, which they cannot share.
4. They will see future torments being prepared for them, even as they endure the present ones.
5. They will see the dwelling places prepared for the faithful.
6. They will see the path of torment open before them.
7. (Worst of all!) They will wither away in fear before the glory of the Lord. (IV Ez.7:82-87, Goodspeed Trans.)

The Day of Judgment shall be the end of this age and the beginning of the age that is to come; wherein

corruption is passed away,
weakness is abolished,
infidelity is cut off;
while righteousness is grown,
and faithfulness is sprung up.

(IV Ez.7:113,114; p.590)

In obedience to the word of God, Ezra chose five learned men and told them the visions. They wrote twenty-four books for all to read--the Old Testament; and seventy secret books, the apocalypses (IV Ez.14:37-48; pp.623,624).

j. II Baruch, The Syriac Apocalypse of Baruch, circa 100 A.D. This is a composite work, some parts earlier and some later than IV Ezra, its "sister document." Written originally in Hebrew, the only complete copy is in Syriac, though there are fragments of the Greek version extant.

In this Apocalypse we have almost the last noble utterance of Judaism before it plunged into the dark and oppressive years that followed the destruction of Jerusalem. For ages after that epoch its people seem to have been bereft of their immemorial gifts of song and eloquence, or to have had thought and energy only for the study and expansion of the traditions of the Fathers. But when our book was written, the evil and barren era had not yet set in; breathing thought and burning work had still their home in Palestine, and the hand of the Jewish artist was still master of its ancient cunning.

The book is written in the name of Baruch, the scribe of Jeremiah, who is said here to have had direct messages from the Lord, himself. He is grieving over the destruction of Jerusalem, and the Lord shows him the heavenly city, which was prepared before Paradise, and had been revealed to Adam, to Abraham, and to Moses (II Bar.4:2-7; p.482). When all the woes of earth are past:

The Messiah shall then begin to be revealed. And Behemoth shall be revealed from his place, and Leviathan shall ascend from the sea, those two great monsters which I created on the fifth day of creation, and shall have kept until that time; and then they shall be for food for all that are left. The earth also shall yield its fruit ten thousandfold and on each vine there shall be a thousand branches, and each branch shall produce a thousand clusters, and each cluster produce a thousand grapes, and each grape produce a cor of wine. And those who have hungered shall rejoice: moreover, also, they shall behold marvels every day. (II Bar.29:4-7; pp.497,498)

The Messiah will then return in glory, and there will be a resurrection:

Then all who have fallen asleep in Him shall rise again. And it shall come to pass at that time that the treasures will be opened in which is preserved the number of the souls of the righteous, and they shall come forth, and a multitude of souls shall be seen together. (II Bar.30:2; p.498)

1. Charles, op. cit., p. 470.

He was eager to know what the resurrection body was like:

The earth shall then assuredly restore the dead,
Which it now received in order to preserve them;
It shall make no change in their form,
But as it has received, so shall it restore them,
And as I delivered them unto it, so also shall it
raise them,

For then it will be necessary to show to the living that
the dead have come to life again, and that those who had
departed have returned. And it shall come to pass when they
have severally recognized those whom they now know, then
judgment will grow strong. . . .

Then shall the aspect of those who are condemned be
afterwards changed, and the glory of those who are justified.
For the aspect of those who now act wickedly shall become
worse than it is, as they shall suffer torment. Also as for
the glory of those who have been justified . . . their
splendor shall be glorified in changes, and the form of their
faces shall be turned into the light of their beauty, that
they may be able to acquire and receive the world that does
not die.

(II Bar.50:1-4;51:1-3, p.508)

The doing of good works is an important preparation for this time:

But those who have been saved by their works, . . .
They shall behold the world that is now invisible
to them,
And they shall behold the time which is now hidden
from them:
And time shall no longer age them.

For in the heights of that world shall they dwell,
And they shall be made like unto the angels,
And be made equal to the stars,
And they shall be changed into every form they desire,
From beauty into loveliness,
And from light into the splendor of glory.

(II Bar.51:7-10; p.509)

Each chooses here on earth his life in the hereafter:

For though Adam first sinned
And brought untimely death upon all,
Yet of those who were born from him
Each one of them has prepared for his own soul
torment to come,
And each one of them has chosen for himself glories
to come.

(II Bar.54:15; p.511)

The advent of Moses marked a new era:

For at that time the lamp of the eternal law shone on all who sat in darkness, which announced to them that believe the promise of their reward, and to them that deny, the torment of fire which is reserved for them. But also the heavens at that time were shaken from their place, and those who were under the throne of the Mighty One were perturbed, when He was taking Moses unto Himself. . . . He showed to him the measures of fire, also the depths of the abyss, and the weight of the winds . . . and the height of the air, and the greatness of Paradise, and the consummation of the ages, and the beginning of the day of judgment.

(II Bar.59:1-8; pp.513,514)

Baruch was interested not only in Judah, but also in the other tribes, and as he could not go and preach to them, he sent a letter warning them that the end of the world was imminent, and they must prepare for it:

For the youth of the world is past,
And the strength of creation is already exhausted,
And the advent of the time is very short,
Yea, they have passed by;
And the pitcher is near to the cistern,
And the ship to the port,
And the course of the journey to the city,
And life to its consummation.

There shall not be again a limit to times,
Nor a duration of the hours,
Nor a change of ways,
Nor a place of prayer,
Nor sending of petitions,
Nor receiving of knowledge,
Nor giving of life,
Nor place of repentance for the soul,
Nor supplication for offences,
Nor intercession of the fathers,
Nor prayer of the prophets,
Nor help of the righteous.

But there is a sentence of corruption,
The way of fire,
And the path which bringeth to Gehenna.

But He will preserve those whom He can forgive,
And at the same time destroy those who are
polluted with sins.

(II Bar.81:12-15; pp.525,526)

k. Pirke Aboth: Sayings of the Fathers, circe 300 B.C.—219 A.D. This is a collection of maxims of Jewish teachers, one of the sixty-three treatises of the Mishnah. The compiler or editor was Rabbi Judah the Holy, who died in 219 A.D., and who may have had a part in the writing, though most of the book is composed of older material. While this is a part of the "Tradition of the Elders," it is sufficiently different from the main body of the Tradition to be included here as a separate document. The Tradition began with Ezra, but no names were preserved of the earliest authors.¹

A few of the maxims relate to the theme of this study:

Who has gained for himself the words of Torah has gained for himself the life of the world to come. (P.A.2:8; p.696)

If thou hast learned much Torah, they will give thee much hire; and the master of thy work is faithful who will pay thee the hire of thy labor; and know that the giving of the reward of the righteous is for the time to come.

(P.A.2:20; p.698)

Keep these three things in view, and thou wilt not come into the clutches of sin: know whence thou comest . . . — from a fetid drop; and whither thou goest—to the place of dust and worm and maggot; and before whom thou art to give a strict account—before the King of the kings of the kings, the Holy One, blessed is He.

(P.A.3:1; p.698)

He who profanes holy things and despises the set feasts and discloses meanings in the Torah which are not according to the Rule, yea, even if he have good works, he has no portion in the world to come.

(P.A.3:16; p.701)

This world is like a porch before the world to come. Make thyself ready in the porch, that thou mayst enter into the banqueting hall.

(P.A.4:21; p.706)

Fairer is one hour of calmness of spirit in the world to come than all the life of this world.

(P.A.4:22; p.706)

What is the difference between the disciples of Abraham our father and the disciples of Balaam the wicked? The disciples of Balaam the wicked inherit Gehenna and go down to the pit of destruction. . . . But the disciples of Abraham our father inherit the Garden of Eden and inherit the world to come.

(P.A.5:22; p.709)

1. Charles, op. cit., p. 686.

2. The Alexandrian Writings

Alexandria in Egypt, founded by Alexander the Great, became a "new center of the world's activity and thought." Its situation made it a link with the civilizations of both West and East. Ptolemy Soter started a great library there which drew men of learning to the city. Then he built a "museum" which was more like a modern university. Here the Greek translation of the Old Testament was made. Many Jews fled to Egypt during the times of upheaval in Palestine; particularly after the fall of Jerusalem large numbers of them congregated in Alexandria. The influence of the school had begun to wane, as many men of learning had moved to Rome. With the entrance of the Jewish sages, Alexandria developed as a new center, with a character of syncretistic philosophy, combining the work of Oriental Gnostics and Jewish theists.¹ From this center came a number of these pseudepigraphical books.

a. The Letter of Aristeas, c. 285-247 B.C. This claims to be a record written by an officer of the court of Ptolemy Philadelphus to his brother, telling of the translation of the Septuagint, but there are several historical inaccuracies that make this authorship impossible. Obvious Jewish propaganda make it almost certain that the author was a Jew, no doubt of the Dispersion. He is begging for clemency for the Jews.²

The God who gave them (the Jews) their law is the God who maintains your kingdom. They worship the same God—the Lord and Creator of the Universe, as all other men, as we ourselves, O King, though we call him by different names, as Zeus or Dis. This name was very appropriately bestowed upon him by our first ancestors, in order to signify that He through whom all things are endowed with life and come into being, is necessarily the ruler and lord of the universe.

(Let. of Ar. 15: p. 96)

(Our Lawgiver) proved first of all that there is only one God, and that his power is manifested throughout the universe, since every place is filled with His sovereignty, and none of the things which are wrought by men upon the earth escapes His knowledge.

(Let. of Ar. 132; p. 107)

1. Unsigned Article, "Alexandrian School," Ency. Brit. (1946), I, 581.

2. Charles, op. cit., pp. 83, 87.

c. The Fourth Book of Maccabees, c. 63 B.C.—38 A.D. This is a lecture or sermon by an orthodox Jew of the Dispersion who is a student of Greek philosophy and "enlists Stoic virtues in the cause of orthodoxy," and who holds up before his people the "sublime heroism of the Maccabaeen martyrs" The book was evidently written after the fall of the Maccabaeen dynasty in Jerusalem, and before the persecutions of Caligula in Egypt.¹

Apollonius, with threats, made his way into the temple. Then the priests in the temple and the women and children besought God to come to the rescue of the Holy Place that was being violated; and when Apollonius with his armed host marched in to seize the moneys, there appeared from heaven angels, riding upon horses, with lightning flashing from their arms, and cast great fear and trembling upon them. And Apollonius fell down half-dead in the Court of the Gentiles and stretched out his hands to heaven, and with tears he entreated the Hebrews that they would make intercession for him and stay the wrath of the heavenly host.
(IV Mac.4:8-11; pp.670,671)

Eleazar, being tortured to death, prayed:

O God, thou knowest that though I might save myself, I am dying by fiery torments for Thy law. Be merciful unto our people, and let our punishment be a satisfaction on their behalf. Make my blood their purification, and take my soul to ransom their souls. (IV Mac.6:28,29; p.674)

The story of the martyrdom of the seven sons and the mother is then told:

For on that day virtue, proving them through endurance, set before them the prize of victory in incorruption in everlasting life. . . . They do now both stand beside the throne of God and live the blessed age. . . . And these men therefore, having sanctified themselves for God's sake, not only have received this honor, but also that honor that through them the enemy had no more power over our people, and the tyrant suffered punishment, and our country was purified, they having as it were become a ransom for our nation's sins; and through the blood of these righteous men and the propitiation of their death, the divine Providence delivered Israel that before was evil entreated.

(IV Mac.17:11-22; p.683)

1. Charles, op. cit., pp. 653,655.

d. The Book of the Secrets of Enoch, or II Enoch, c. 30 B.C.-79 A.D.

This is a fragment of Enochic literature, preserved only in the Slavonic version, which is a writing entirely distinct from I Enoch. It was probably written in Greek by a Hellenistic Jew in Egypt.¹

The Introduction to the Book states:

There was a wise man, a great artificer, and the Lord conceived love for him and received him, that he should behold the uppermost dwellings and be an eye-witness of the wise and great and inconceivable and immutable realm of God Almighty, of the very wonderful and glorious and bright and many-eyed station of the Lord's servants, and of the inaccessible throne of the Lord, and of the degrees and manifestations of the incorporeal hosts, and of the ineffable ministrations of the multitude of the elements, and of the various apparition and inexpressible singing of the host of Cherubim, and of the boundless light. (p. 431)

The Lord sent angels, "exceeding big" their faces shining like the sun, with eyes like a burning light, clothed in purple and with wings of gold, to bring Enoch to heaven and show him the mysteries. They took him on their wings and set him on the clouds, where he could see the first heaven: here were the angels who ruled the stars, the weather, and trees and flowers of earth. (II En.1-6, pp.431-433). In the second heaven were the fallen angels, hanging, waiting for the "great and boundless judgment." They begged Enoch to pray for them, but he said that he, a mortal man, could not pray for angels (II En.7, p..433). In the third heaven he saw the "tree of life, where the Lord rests when he goes up to Paradise." This was a beautiful place, the "paradise of Eden," which lies between heaven and earth. This is prepared for the righteous who have endured "all manner of offence from those that exasperate their souls" on earth, and who have been compassionate and helpful to those in need. But on the opposite side of the same heaven is a place of terrible torture for sinners who grow rich at the expense of others and dishonor God. There is frost and ice here, not melted by the river of raging fire which only makes the darkness darker. (II En. 8-10, pp. 433-435).

1. Charles, op. cit., pp. 425, 429.

In the fourth heaven Enoch saw the circuits of the sun, moon, and stars, and the many angels accompanying them, with instruments of music and very beautiful singing (II En.11-17; pp.436-439). In the fifth heaven were Satan or "Satanail" and the fallen angels. This was a place of darkness and silence where they wait for final judgment. Enoch asked them why they did not pray to the Lord for mercy, and they broke the silence, singing to the Lord very "pitifully and affectingly" (II En.18; pp.439,440). In the sixth heaven there were seven bands of bright and glorious angels singing songs of praise with beautiful harmonies, led by archangels who watch over all the living things of earth (II En.19; pp.440,441).

In the seventh heaven were fiery troops of great archangels. This was on a mountain-top, from which he could see in the far distance the throne of God. There were seven steps here, and a multitude of angels on each one. The angels who had brought Enoch from earth left him alone here; then the great Angel Gabriel "caught me up as a leaf is caught by the wind," and led Enoch on the rest of his journey. He passed quickly through the eighth heaven where the angels direct the varying seasons of the earth; and the ninth heaven which is the home of the signs of the zodiac (II En.20,21; pp.441,442).

Then the angel took Enoch straight to the tenth heaven and the throne of God. He saw the face of God, which was "ineffable, marvelous, and very awful, and very, very terrible" (II En.22:1; p.442).

And who am I to tell of the Lord's unspeakable being, and of his very wonderful face? and I cannot tell the quantity of his many instructions, and various voices, the Lord's throne very great and not made with hands, nor the quantity of those standing round him, troops of cherubim and seraphim, nor of their incessant singing, nor his immutable beauty, and who shall tell of the ineffable greatness of his glory?

(II En.22:2,3; pp.442,443)

Enoch fell prone before the Lord, but the Lord ordered that he should rise and stand before his face "into eternity." Enoch was then disrobed of his garments of earth, and given "garments of glory" and then the Lord commanded:

Bring out the books from my storehouses, and a reed of quick-writing, and give it to Enoch, and deliver to him the choice and comforting books out of my hand." (II En.22:12; p.443)

Enoch wrote three hundred and sixty-six books, telling of his journey, of the angels directing all the things of earth, of the glories of heaven, and of all the places prepared for the sons of men. He wrote for thirty days and thirty nights. God told him all the "secrets" never before revealed even to angels: how all things were created in six days (II En.23-35; pp.443-453). It was on the second day of creation that:

One from out the order of angels, having turned away with the order that was under him, conceived an impossible thought, to place his throne higher than the clouds above the earth, that he might become equal in rank to my power.

And I threw him out from the height with his angels, and he was flying in the air continuously above the bottomless.
(II En.29:4,5; p.447)

The creation of man on the sixth day was told him in detail:

I commanded my wisdom to create man from seven consistencies: one, his flesh from the earth; two, his blood from the dew; three, his eyes from the sun; four, his bones from stone; five, his intelligence from the swiftness of the angels and from cloud; six, his veins and his hair from the grass of the earth; seven, his soul from my breath and from the wind.

And I gave him seven natures: to the flesh, hearing; the eyes for sight; to the soul, smell; the veins for touch; the blood for taste; the bones for endurance; to the intelligence sweetness (enjoyment).

I . . . created man from invisible and from visible nature; of both are his death and life and image; he knows speech like some created thing, small in greatness and again great in smallness; and I placed him on earth, a second angel, honorable, great and glorious, and I appointed him as ruler to rule on earth and to have my wisdom, and there was none like him on earth of all my existing creatures.

(II En.30:8-12; pp.448,449)

The Lord told Enoch to return to earth for thirty days and give these books to his sons to pass on, "children to children, generation to generation, nation to nation" (II En.33:9; p.452). An angel came and froze his face, for the glory of it would be so great, after having been in the presence of God, that the people would not be able to stand the sight of him, "just as it is not possible to endure a stove's fire" (II En.37; pp.453,454).

After Enoch had spent the allotted time telling of his experiences and giving instructions in the way of right living, God sent a heavy cloud over the earth, so that the people could not see the glorious angel who came to take him back to the tenth heaven (II En.67; p.469).

e. III Baruch, or The Greek Apocalypse of Baruch, c. 100 A.D. This is the work of a Jewish Gnostic at the beginning of the second century, "when gnosis was at its height both among Jews and Christians," according to Ginsberg, but there is little advance on Tobit in its views. However, it is clear that Judaism had been affected by Hellenic-Oriental syncretism. There is no point of contact between this book and the Apocryphal Baruch except that both deal with the problem of the sufferings of Israel. There are some similarities between this and the Syriac Baruch, but they are not sufficient to indicate any dependence of either one on the other.¹

Baruch stood by the river weeping over the destruction of Jerusalem, and "the angel of the power" was sent to show him "all the mysteries." He was taken through the five heavens, the first three of which were for the wicked. In the first, were men with faces like oxen and horns of stags and feet of goats, who had built the tower of Babel. In the second, men "had the appearance of dogs" and were those who directed the building of that tower, who "took a gimlet and tried to pierce heaven." The third was Hades, "dark and abominable," where a huge dragon ate the bodies of the wicked. Here was the tree that led Adam astray, but it had been changed into a horrid vine that grew over everything (III Bar.1-4; pp.533-536).

The last two heavens were for the righteous. The first had a beautiful lake and many large birds. Here the righteous congregated and joined the birds in singing praises to God. The gate of the fifth heaven was closed and could not be opened until Michael came with the "keys of the kingdom of heaven." Here was the throne of God. Angels brought baskets of flowers to present to God, which were the merits of the saints. These were received, and oil was sent back in proportion to the number of flowers, (III Bar.10-15; pp.533-541).

1. Charles, op. cit., pp. 527, 529.

f. The Books of Adam and Eve, c. 60-300 A.D. These books belong to a cycle of legendary matter of which the Jews were fond. It is hard to tell how much belongs to the original kernel. They are difficult to date, for there are no historical allusions, but the theology and eschatology are similar to that of II Enoch. The author was probably a Jew of the Dispersion, writing in Egypt. They are written in Greek, but there are many Hebraistic expressions. There are versions extant in Greek and Latin, and also one in Slavonic which is somewhat different.¹

When Adam and Eve were driven out of Paradise, they built a booth and spent seven days mourning. Then they were hungry, but could not find any of the angels' food which they had eaten in Eden. There was only animals' food for them (A. & E. 1-4; p.134). But Michael the archangel prayed for them, and the Lord gave them a seventh part of Paradise, but allowed thorns and thistles to grow in it (Slav.A. & E. 31; p.134).

The devil tempted Eve further, causing her to stop doing penance; when Adam learned this he berated the devil:

With a heavy sigh the devil spake: "O Adam! All my hostility, envy, and sorrow is for thee, since it is for thee that I have been expelled from my glory, which I possessed in the heavens in the midst of the angels, and for thee was I cast out of the earth."
(A. & E. 12:1,2; p.137)

The angel Michael came to Adam "in a chariot like the wind" with fiery wheels, and took Adam into "the Paradise of righteousness" where God spoke to him:

Behold thou diest since thou hast transgressed the commandment of God. . . . Thou hast been created with a love of knowledge, therefore there shall not be taken from thy seed forever the right to serve me.
(A. & E. 26:2; 27:3; p.140)

Adam was suffering great pain, so he sent Eve and Seth to the gate of Paradise to put dust on their heads and "throw yourselves on the ground and lament in the sight of God," praying that He would give them one drop of the oil of life from the tree, which would give him rest from his pains. But the

1. Charles, op. cit., pp. 123,129.

serpent met them on the way and bit Seth, but he was able to continue the journey. After many hours of prayer and lamentation, the angel Michael came and told them that the Lord would not give them any of the oil until "the last days," and that in six days Adam would die (A.& E.35-43; pp.142-144).

When Adam died, the sun, moon, and stars were all darkened for a period of seven days (A.& E.46; p.150). Then God sent Michael to bring Seth into his presence and let him see what would become of his father Adam (A.& E.47;p.150)

All the angels blew their trumpets, and cried: "Blessed art thou, O Lord, for thou hast had pity on Thy creature."

Then Seth saw the hand of God stretched out holding Adam and he handed him over to Michael saying, "Let him be in thy charge till the day of Judgment in punishment, till the last years, when I will convert his sorrow into joy. Then shall he sit on the throne of him who hath been his supplanter. (A.& E.47,48; p.150)

The angels prepared the body of Adam for burial, and told Seth that all the sons of men should be buried in like manner (A.& E.48; pp.151,152).

After the death of Eve there was great mourning, but the archangel again appeared to Seth, saying:

Man of God, mourn not for thy dead more than six days, for on the seventh day is the sign of the resurrection and the rest of the age to come; on the seventh day the Lord rested from all his works. (A.& E.51; p.153)

g. The Apocalypse of Moses, c. 30-300 A.D. The author of this book was probably the editor who put together the older legends of Adam and Eve into their complete form, a Jew of the Dispersion. The title is incorrect, and probably arose through a confusion with Jubilees, which was a revelation to Moses through the "Angel of the Presence."¹

The Apocalypse of Moses follows the same story as that of the Books of Adam and Eve, the story of Adam and Eve after they had gone out of Paradise. There is an excuse given for Eve's falling before the temptation, for the angels who were her guardians had left her alone while they went up to worship the

1. Charles, op. cit., pp. 124, 129.

Lord, and Adam was far away from her. So she had no help in the time of her trial (Apoc.Moses 7:2; p. 142). Adam's punishment is different:

Since thou hast abandoned my covenant, I have brought upon thy body seventy-two strokes; the trouble of the first stroke is pain of the eyes, the second stroke, an affection of the hearing, and likewise in turn all the strokes shall befall thee. (Apoc. Moses 8:2;p.142)

Eve's fear seemed to be chiefly what the people of earth would think of her:

Woe is me; if I come to the day of Resurrection, then all those who have sinned will curse me, saying, "Eve hath not kept the commandment of God." (Apoc.Moses 10:2; p.143)

Eve's prayer of penitence is given:

I have sinned, O God; I have sinned, O God of All,
I have sinned against Thee;
I have sinned against the elect angels;
I have sinned against the Cherubim;
I have sinned against Thy fearful and unshakable Throne.
I have sinned before Thee,
And all sin hath begun through my doing in the creation.
(Apoc.Moses 32:1,2; p.149)

The "angel of humanity" came to Eve and told her that Adam had died, and that she could see his spirit "go aloft to his Maker" (Apoc.Moses 32:4; p.150).

She gazed steadfastly into heaven and beheld a chariot of light, borne by four bright eagles, and it were impossible for any man born of women to tell the glory of them or behold their face. . . . "And I beheld golden censers between your father and the chariot, and all the angels with censers and frankincense came in haste to the incense-offering and blew upon it and the smoke of the incense veiled the firmaments." (Apoc.Moses 33:2-5; p.150)

Look up and see with thine eyes the seven heavens opened and see how the soul of thy father lies on its face, and all the holy angels are praying on his behalf, saying, "Pardon him, Father of All, for he is Thine image." (Apoc.Moses 35:2; p.150)

And God said to (Adam): "I told thee that earth thou art and to earth thou shalt return. Again I promise to thee the Resurrection; I will raise thee up in the Resurrection with every man who is thy seed. (Apoc.Moses 41:2,3; p.152)

While much of all these pseudepigraphical works are written with vivid imagination, in fantastic language, there was back of them a very practical purpose: to give Israel some hope in the midst of her difficulties, to assure her that all was well. If the hopes of a glorious kingdom on this earth were to be long delayed, there was yet a splendor of heaven to anticipate.

The ideas had crystallized into a very definite assurance of a future life with God in heaven for all those who were faithful--and this was very generally interpreted to mean all the people of Israel. Those who had failed in some of their duties were to be given a "place of repentance" in that next world and would not be judged until the "last day." Orient and Occident blended to supply the figures for the descriptions of the fearful trials awaiting the wicked, and the glories awaiting the righteous. The Law was rigidly adhered to, but explanations of the meanings left ample room for the embellishments that are found in almost all the literature of this period.

CHAPTER XIV

SUMMARY

A. Pre-History

This study has covered an inestimable number of years and a great deal of the world's surface, with attempts to look into the next world—a most unusual amount of territory for one survey. However, the quest has been limited to one line of study: man's search for God, and his belief in and picture of life after death. Back in the long-past ages of prehistory, man took his first steps upward—steps toward God and toward a belief in spiritual things. These steps cannot be accurately known, but must be estimated. The work is like that of the anthropologist who can take a piece of skull and a tooth and picture a living man! Buried under the dust of the far-distant past there have been a few signs pointing the way.

That man was made "from the dust of the ground" is proved by his return to dust. But that man has risen above the dust seems to prove that there is something beyond himself pulling him upward. That Something has usually been called God. The belief is expressed that God "breathed into his nostrils the breath of life" (Gen.2:7)—and whatever that may mean, there must have been some contact between God and the earliest man. The story of man's development must be the story of God revealing Himself to man, as far as man was able to understand; and further revealing Himself progressively as man grew in understanding.

Just how these early men knew of God is not sure, but it is known that they had some definite belief in a life beyond this one of earth from the very careful way in which they laid away their dead. Because of the work of the archaeologist, it is possible to penetrate into the mystery of prehistoric man's thoughts, for all over the world their graves can be found, and the patient work of these scientific students of the past has helped in reading the meanings of these dim records of ancient days.

It is true that these worlds which the archaeologist and the historian have brought back from oblivion seem remote and very different from our own. Yet who would dare to claim that western civilization is not the heir of the civilizations of the Near East, succeeding to their heritage of art and culture, the inventory of which is now being made? Who would deny our debt to the peoples of the Nile valley or the banks of the Euphrates? Are there not in the East inexhaustible treasures to be revealed to the scholar, the artist and the believer? . . . What shall we say if it is granted us to penetrate the thoughts of the ancients, and to turn over the leaves of their antique archives? if, in short, we come to sit and warm ourselves by that fire which, never quite dead under the ashes, is being fanned anew by attentive hands?¹

So, sifting these ashes of the past, early man is discovered laying the dead away carefully, burying with the body ornaments which he wore in life, giving him his tools to work with, his stone vessels to use. What made him think that this man whose time on earth had ended could still use and enjoy his things of earthly life? Perhaps he dreamed of sharing experiences with the one who had gone. Perhaps his vivid memories seemed real. He could not think of this one as other than living and working, enjoying life. So he expressed his faith by his careful burial.

After the passing of a few centuries, or perhaps even millennia, the signs of sacrificial meals are found at many tombs, which suggest some sort of burial ritual. Judging by the beliefs of a primitive people of a later day, it is probable that the spirits of the dead were believed to attend and enjoy the feast. The very fact that the embers of their ceremonies are found at the grave site indicates that the fear of ghosts was not a part of their thinking. Later there were demons in great numbers, and fear of the dead is apparent, but not in these earliest years. If the stories in Genesis are authentic folk tales that have been handed down from very early ages, it is certain that they believed in the presence of angels, guarding them carefully, which may have been God's way of leading them into an understanding of his watchful care.

1. André Parrot, Discovering Buried Worlds, p. 12.

Yet all was not a beautiful upward path. Another story from these early days has a very different significance. This reflects God's first judgment of earth: man's failure to live up to the light that he had, and the resulting destruction of the world by the waters of a great flood. This story is found in nearly all the religions of the world, and may indicate that all the world is of one flesh and blood, stemming from the one man saved; or it may indicate rather that in each of a number of different countries there was found a man who was "blameless in his generation" (Gen.6:9), who was chosen to carry on the race. The stories that have been handed down give various names for the hero of that experience. Whether the people of earth all stemmed from one "first man" so that by counting back to Adam, or to Noah, one can find that all men are brothers, or whether there were many "first men" there is no way of knowing. The remains of men from the very earliest times are found all over the world: near the bones of a sabre-tooth tiger in Vero Beach, Florida; by the dinosaur skeleton in the far western part of the United States; high up in the Andes ridges; on islands of the Pacific; in the mountains of Thibet; all around the Mediterranean shore; even in the ice-laden Arctic. If all men stemmed from a single person, the descendants traveled far and fast. It seems more likely that Adam was a generic name, standing for a whole series of God's creatures. Further, all over the earth there are signs of the belief in man's living on after death, and similar ways of expressing that belief, as though it must be a part of man's normal development under the guiding hand of the Creator.

B. The Significance of Palestine

Though in all the world signs can be found of man's developing thought and life, there is one section that stands out significantly in that regard, and particularly for the spiritual growth. This is the "land bridge" connecting Europe, Asia, and Africa, so that any traffic between these three continents that went overland passed through its valleys. Because of the desert, caravans followed the Euphrates River along the "fertile crescent" going on to Asia Minor, or turning south and traveling through Palestine on the way to Egypt.

The land of Canaan has had an importance in the history of civilization quite out of proportion to its size. It was the bridge between Africa and Asia. Here converged the great trade routes of the ancient world. . . . It was the sensitive recipient of diversified streams of culture. . . . It was thus the meeting place and the melting pot of ideas and ideals of the ancient world.¹

Thus all the beliefs of many nations have been sifted through the media of this one small land, where a people lived in covenant relation with God. All the world, so to speak, poured their treasures into this one place, and these people who felt that they were called by God to live for Him and be a blessing to the world, chose what they would have and rejected the rest. People whose names are forgotten except as the spade of the archaeologist digs up the records of their life, have contributed to the growing culture of these people, and through them to the world, which owes them a debt for their skills, but more for their ideas and their faith. No more is known about the first developments than about individual first faltering steps and lisped words. When first reported on the pages of history, they were well advanced along many lines. But all the spiritual concepts of modern civilization are not only "built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets" (Eph. 2:20), but also on the lower foundations, perhaps the bed-rock, of many who have lived so long ago that they are almost entirely forgotten. Even the people of lands farthest off, who have had no direct contact with the main stream, in so far as they are members of the developing human race, are world ancestors in culture and faith.

C. The Historic Era

In the historic era when men had learned the art of writing and had carved their thoughts in stone, or incised them on clay tablets, or printed them with ink, one is on surer ground. More of their hopes and fears are known, their groping toward God, their failures as well as their triumphs. The whole story is written, and it is not always a happy one:

Leslie, Old Testament Religion, p. 13.

This dialog between heaven and earth was never-ending. Yet it had its troubles, and the record, in which everything might have been light, is interleaved with shadows and with blood. Some readers of the Old Testament have found, and still find, certain of its pages scandalous. Why scandalous? Archaeology intervenes once more, revealing the Biblical world in its entirety—by which is meant no longer Palestine only, but also Mesopotamia, Syria, Phoenicia and Egypt. By bringing us dated documents from all these peoples and races, among whom Israel is only a tiny island, it enables us to make comparisons and contrasts which explain and clarify everything. If we set Israel against the background of the period, there is no longer any risk of our being shocked or put out by anything the Bible has to say, firstly, because we find evidence elsewhere of the same imperfections and the same mistaken ideas. We must frankly recognize these imperfections, those mistakes, even those crimes; and we must not interpret them in terms of an extravagant and exaggerated symbolism. "The stones cry out." Let them cry, but let us scrupulously respect what has been called their "frank speech." ¹

Even those who made gross mistakes in their interpretation of God's will have made some contribution to the world. There is need for the red light of warning as well as for the green light of smooth progress. It is told of Thomas A. Edison that he made about a thousand experiments with different filaments before he found one that would produce the electric light. The scientists in laboratories use hundreds of cultures before they find the right antibiotic. That which has proved true in scientific discovery may be symbolic of discoveries on the spiritual plane.

The path of the righteous may be "like the light of dawn, which shines brighter and brighter until the full day" (Prov.4:18), after they get well established in righteous life; but in actual practice for mere mortals who are stumbling along the way, learning by the difficult trial and error method, the path wavers considerably. The suggestion of the spiral decoration of the Malta tombs, "around and around in a circle it must move, making but a very little gain with each revolution"² seems more in keeping with the story.

1. Parrot, op. cit., pp. 116, 117.

2. Wicher, "Malta" Art and Archaeology.

The Old Testament presents such a picture of spiral progress rather than of direct ascent. The prophet had the vision and proclaimed his message to apparently-deaf ears; but somebody heard it, took it to heart, and passed it on. One or two generations later it had become a motive for their living. Israel took many backward steps and had many falls, but somehow learned deep spiritual lessons each time, lessons that have enriched the world.

Thou makest the outgoings of the morning
and the evening
to shout for joy.

Thou visitest the earth and waterest it,
thou greatly enrichest it;
the river of God is full of water;
thou providest their grain,
for so thou hast prepared it.

Thou waterest its furrows abundantly,
settling its ridges,
softening it with showers,
and blessing its growth. . . .

The meadows clothe themselves with flocks,
the valleys deck themselves with grain,
they shout and sing together for joy.

(Psa.65:8-13)

Some read God's beautiful message in the glory of the sunset glow, in life's renewal with the morning sunrise, in the changing seasons and the fruitful harvest. But there is another voice also:

The Lord also thundered in the heavens,
and the Most High uttered his voice,
hailstones and coals of fire.

He sent out his arrows, and scattered them;
and the foundations of the world were laid bare,
at thy rebuke, O Lord,
at the blast of the breath of thy nostrils.

(Psa.18:3-5)

So there were others who cowered before God in fear. The two attitudes toward God existed side by side, sometimes with emphasis on fear, and with the development of magic rites to ward off evil; again, with the thought on better, higher things. Occasionally there was a healthy recognition of both, with an understanding, even though dim, of stern justice and righteousness. Those who had that were the hope of the world.

The prophetic word for those few is "remnant," through whom God was and is continually saving the world. No doubt there were others in Haran who could have heard the voice of God calling them to found a new nation, to give to the world the knowledge of the God who cared for and watched over His own people. Nahor had the same background as Abraham, but only Abraham heard. Perhaps Lot heard also and followed, but his conviction did not last. (Gen.12:1-4; 13:12). Instances could be multiplied. God called to people not to fear death. The Egyptians heard and built elaborate tombs, and wrote funeral texts in whose magic effects they relied, and missed the greatest beauty of God's word. The Babylonians heard, and wrote long stories of the frantic pursuit of an eternal life on this earth, which ended in failure. In Syria and Canaan they heard, with perhaps a little clearer understanding of the meaning; then they turned into a by-path of imitative magic which destroyed what light they had, and brought about their own destruction. In distant lands over the sea men heard and feared, and thought that God demanded human sacrifice.

But the leading of God became basic in the belief of Israel, and some held true to it, though others followed the pagan beliefs of their neighbors. There is very little said about belief in life after death in the pages of the Old Testament, but the few references are hopeful. It was for them a safe foundation for their lives, and made them free to give attention to some very practical things. The influence of the Babylonian captivity seems to have introduced them to many angels, and to have set them thinking along the lines of a future life—at least more is written about it after that time.

D. The Inter-Testamental Period

It remained for the Inter-Testamental Period, the time of political and national difficulty, with their high hopes in the Maccabaeae kingdom frustrated, to produce much apocalyptic literature, looking toward the next world and a spiritual kingdom. Many people have lost their independence and faded into the background, never to be heard from again. The story of the archaeologists is one of forgotten empires. Israel's change of focus preserved her life. With temporal power gone, she changed to spiritual ideals.

The religion of modern civilization at its best is from Palestine. The Greek polytheism is dead, but the Jewish monotheism has mastered the world . . . the old gods are dead.

The Jew was alone among ancient religionists in asserting the oneness of God.¹

E. The New Hope

The conquest of Alexander the Great opened the roadways of the world, bringing a mingling of Greek and Oriental cultures. Both in Palestine and in Egypt, and in other parts of the Roman world where Jews had fled from the internal strife and persecution at home, Jewish leaders were meeting new ideas. Though they were true to the teachings of the fathers, and accepted nothing that would in any way lower their high ideas of God and of righteousness, nevertheless their thoughts of life and death and of the future of their own nation, underwent a definite transformation. If there was no hope of a political supremacy on earth for them, then in the next world they would come into their own. Their faith in God and their careful observance of the Law would be rewarded. They envisioned horrors of hell for their enemies and glories without number for the true and faithful. There was still some hope of a glorious kingdom on earth, but it took on supernatural aspect, with a divine, or at least semi-divine, Messianic, king. But a new heaven and a new earth which they would share in resurrected life was the final consummation of their dreams. There was even hope that Adam and some others who had sinned in days of old, would be forgiven and share the glory. Then all would learn the angelic chorus, reported by more than one writer:

Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts,
To whom be glory and power for ever and ever. AMEN
(Apoc.Moses 13:5; p.154)

1. William A. Quayle, The Dynamite of God (New York: The Methodist Book Concern, 1918), pp. 36,37.

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This report submitted to Dr. Kenyon and approved by her.

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Also Tomb Catalogs for several years, compiled by Diana Kirkbride.

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ABBREVIATIONS

A. S. O. R., American Schools of Oriental Research

Ency. Brit., Encyclopedia Britannica.

Enc. Rel. & Eth. Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics.

Lib. Best Lit. Library of the World's Best Literature.

Nat. Geog. Mag. National Geographic Magazine.

ABSTRACT

A study of the origins of any belief entails the investigation of pre-history. In the search for the earliest beginnings of the belief in life after death, it is further necessary to include a belief in God, and in man's awareness of spiritual things, since the belief in the future life is part of the whole religious consciousness of man.

Man came into being so long ago that his first religious awakening is buried in the mists of earth's morning. Archaeological investigation has found the earliest knowledge of man connected with his belief in life after death: his careful burial of the dead, with weapons, utensils, and ornaments for use in the next world. Thus man's cultural development can be traced by his burial deposits. It seems proved beyond a doubt that belief in life after death was universal, and must have been part of man's consciousness, which may suggest the Creation account that he was "made in the image of God."

While very little is known of any other actions or beliefs of man so long ago, it is recognized by the remains at the grave that burial entailed some kind of religious ceremony. This can be seen by the many cup-holes found at the grave sites, which suggest libation offerings; by the early-recognized remains of feasts held there, which may have been either funeral or memorial rites; and by the vestibule entrances to many of the Chalcolithic tombs, often with an altar in central position.

In Egypt people paid more attention to life after death and built more elaborate tombs than anywhere else in the world, and here was apparently the first distinction recognized between good and evil in the world beyond. The pictures on the walls of the early tomb-temples portray souls being weighed, and show the happy life awaiting the successful, and the dangers in store for those who fail to make the grade.

After the invention of writing, development can be followed more clearly. Egyptian documents are many, dealing with life in the future world, and the

incantations to insure a happy state there. Mesopotamian epics recount prolonged attempts to attain immortality, and belief in the power of gods over men. Burial rites can be read from Hittite documents. Homeric epics tell a like tale. In far-off America such belief is found and similar rites practiced. This seems to have been a normal development, but it was not all an upward trail. In many parts of the world magic rites developed, often accompanied by human sacrifices to insure favor of gods who were placated rather than worshiped.

In the midst of these people, Israel seems to have maintained a healthy interest in life on earth, with death only casually mentioned. These people were aware of the interest of the Lord, their One God, in the affairs of everyday life; the dead were "gathered to their fathers." They were often tempted into the ways of their pagan neighbors, but the prophets gave protest continually, upholding high ideals. Life after death is mentioned incidentally, which may indicate that it was a basic belief which they did not need to emphasize. Until the later writings, which may have been influenced by Persian concepts, this spirit life was but a shadowy existence. Even in the Psalms, where one would expect a soaring of the spirit, the outlook is dismal. Sheol is a land of darkness and forgetfulness; the shades "cannot praise the Lord." In the later writings there are a few references to a happy state in the next world, but Daniel is the only prophet who speaks of a resurrection of both good and evil for judgment.

The victories of the Maccabean revolt, and the establishment of Jewish independent national life finally under the leadership of John Hyrcanus, led to a return of high hopes that the golden age prophesied for them was at hand. When the failure of the new regime frustrated their expectations, they did not lose faith in God or in their prophetic future. They lifted their expectations to a new plane. Many apocryphal references to the future of Jerusalem look to an eternal glory that is more than earthly, and an anointed leader or Messiah of superhuman qualities. The newly-discovered Dead Sea Scrolls give emphasis to the Messianic expectations.

Meanwhile, in lands all over the earth men were seeking light on the next world, and some way of being assured of a good place there. Many mystery

religions had developed, similar in belief: spirits both good and bad, active in both worlds; a resurrection of the god, developed from the old nature cults where winter's sleep and spring's awakening suggested a resurrection symbolism; and ceremonies to induce that god to grant a good life in the spirit world. Philosophers and astrologers also were teaching types of eternal life. Such developments are evidence of the universal longing of the human heart to find some way to overcome the tragedy of death.

The conquest of Alexander the Great opened the roads of the world, and brought to Palestine as well as to other nations, the contact with the Greek culture. While Greek influences were moving eastward, Oriental culture was moving toward the West. The Jewish Dispersion placed the Jews in the very center of this movement, for all varieties of thought and worship were found in Egypt where most of them were finally settled. The Pseudepigraphical writings reflect this influence, both in the Palestinian and the Egyptian books. The foreign influence is most noticeable in the conception of life after death: vivid descriptions of the horrors of hell and the glories of heaven. There is a suggestion also that a few people would find the punishment of the lower world remedial, and would later be admitted to Paradise.

The Jews were discriminating in their acceptance of pagan ideas. They rejected anything that would lower their conception of the great God of both heaven and earth. He was the one and only God, over all, majestic and of great glory, but even so never removed far from earth. He was their "Guide even unto death," and their Father who showed steadfast love to his children of earth. They looked forward to an immediate entrance at death into places prepared for them "from the foundation of the world": for the wicked, places of torment; for the righteous, heavenly glories. And they expected a Leader, God-anointed, a Messiah, who would come to earth and restore the Paradise of Eden. A final Day of Judgment would mean destruction for all that was evil, and rewards for the faithful, after which there would come from God a "new heaven and a new earth" where righteousness would prevail, and all would be joy.

AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

Name: Wilma E. Davis

Birth: August 24, 1891, St. Augustine, Florida.

Father: Henry Winter Davis, born in Centralia, Ill.,
August 17, 1860; father born in Kentucky,
mother born in Germany.

Mother: Iva Rainey Davis, born in Salem, Ill.,
June 10, 1861. Parentage: French
Huguenot and Scotch "Covenanter."

School: St. Augustine Public School and High School.
Graduated, 1908.

College: John B. Stetson University: A.B., 1912;
A.M., 1919. Major: Religious Education.

I taught a class of High School girls, Sunday and
Friday Sessions, four years: a study of Biblical Introductions of my
own planning. The 75 charts that we made were on display at the
General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church in Springfield,
Mass., in 1920, and Miss Robinson used them in her National Junior
Epworth League work. Some of this material was used in the Junior
Worker's Quarterly, an Epworth League publication later discontinued.

1919-1928: Summer Sessions at the Winona Lake School of Theology—the
first two years there, the Summer School of the Northern Baptist
Theological Seminary. I was Registrar of the School and took their
Archaeological courses.

Traveling Preacher's Course of Study for the Methodist Ministry.

Licensed, December 1920; Deacon's Orders, April, 1925; Elder's Orders,
April, 1929: St. Johns River Conference, Florida. Orders transferred
to the Florida Conference of the Methodist Church on unification.

With Dr. William E. Biederwolf in Evangelistic work, 1925, 1926.

1928-1929, Associate Pastor, Community Methodist Church, Daytona Beach.

1929-1938, Pastor Community Methodist Church (Davie), Fort Lauderdale.

1938-1941, Boston University School of Theology: S.T.B., 1941

Teaching: John B. Stetson University, Art Department: 1912-1914.
University Foundation, St. Augustine, Florida, 1943-1950.
(History and Literature in Junior College; New Testament
Greek in Theological Department—Graduate.)

1954-1955, American School of Oriental Research, Jerusalem, Jordan, as a
Graduate Student of Boston University, working for Ph.D. degree.

